

*Technical Report on Significant Natural Open Space  
in the Anchorage Bowl:*

*A Survey of Biologically Important Habitat and Areas Identified  
As Important By the Anchorage Community*

*Compiled by The Great Land Trust*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Early in the process of updating Anchorage's Comprehensive Plan, the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) recognized, through surveys and from public opinions polls, that a majority of local residents place a high value on natural open space near their homes and places of business. In fact, one survey conducted in November 1997 showed that the three top elements Anchorage residents valued most about the city were its majestic natural setting, abundant wildlife, and parks, open space and trails. This information led municipal planners to consider how best to plan for natural open space as part of the revision of the Comprehensive Plan for the Anchorage Bowl, *Anchorage 2020*.

Concluding that little comprehensive data existed regarding natural open space in the Bowl, the Department of Community Planning and Development requested that The Great Land Trust collect the information conveyed in this report and the related maps. The Great Land Trust staff has real estate and natural resources expertise that make the Trust particularly qualified to assemble this information for the Municipality. The goal of this project was to compile a baseline dataset: to identify natural open space areas that are significant for either their biological value or their value to the public or both. Accordingly, this inventory consists of two parts: biological data about Anchorage's existing open space, Part 1 of this Technical Report; and data reflecting community preferences and uses of natural open space, Part 2.

This biological and community preference information is designed to assist municipal planners who are drafting the natural open space recommendations and implementation strategies presented in *Anchorage 2020*. This information should prove especially invaluable for planners revising the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Plan in 2000.

Two methods of data collection were used to compile the information contained in this report. Key informant interviews with local scientific experts provided the biological information. To assemble the data on community preferences the Municipality of Anchorage and the Great Land Trust co-sponsored two widely publicized public open houses to reach as broad a cross-section of the community as possible. Each method is explained more fully at the beginning of each data summary.

## **THE GREAT LAND TRUST**

The Great Land Trust, founded in 1995 by Alaskans from the Southcentral region and based in Anchorage, is a private, nonpartisan, non-profit organization dedicated to conserving in perpetuity lands and waters essential to the quality of life and economic health of our communities, including:

- Open space in and near towns and cities;
- Important recreational lands
- Wetlands and waterways
- Natural ecosystems
- Fish and wildlife habitats
- Farms and working forest land

We are governed by a local, volunteer board of directors and funded through the generosity of individual members and local businesses as well as corporate and foundation grants. We seek to build bridges between groups of citizens that might otherwise not work together including real estate developers and park advocates. Our methods do not include litigation or other advocacy oriented land protection techniques.

We use a variety of voluntary techniques to protect land including purchasing critical wetland parcels and accepting donations of land, conservation easements and development rights from willing landowners who wish to protect the special features of their land through private action. The Great Land Trust's land conservation efforts also include: cooperating with citizens, community groups and governmental entities on land use planning projects that benefit the community; working with the community to foster an appreciation of land stewardship; and bringing together diverse community members to help preserve the natural heritage and unique quality of life we enjoy in Southcentral Alaska.

### ***How Does This Work Contribute To The Long-Term Sustainability Of Anchorage***

As Anchorage continues to grow and develop, the Municipality and its residents will make choices regarding land use. While comprehensive land use planning is a first step for any community that seeks to impact its long term development trends and, thereby preserve the long-term economic, social and cultural vitality of an urban environment, planners need quality information to inform the planning effort. Without good data, planners can neither interpret current trends nor evaluate future scenarios. This project provides valuable data on habitat and reflects community use of natural open space. This kind of information assists the Municipality as it undertakes sophisticated and coherent land use planning.

With the completion of this project, Municipality has its first baseline survey of critical habitat lands for more than 100 wildlife species, including regionally rare species, and its first survey of significant lands that the community values for a variety of uses, ranging from environmental education to recreational use. In addition, municipal planners have access to this dataset in electronic form on the municipal Geographic Information System Database. This means that the biological and social inventories can be readily updated as additional studies are done, at a low cost. As Anchorage changes so can this information set.

Furthermore, because the information is maintained in this flexible and accessible form it can be used for other projects. For instance, consultants working on the coastal trail project are using the biological data and maps as part of their planning efforts both internally as they attempt to site the trail and in forums seeking public input.

### ***Where Does The Great Land Trust Go From Here***

The Great Land Trust is pleased to provide this unique and useful information to the Municipality. We are also using this data internally to inform the Trust's own work and prioritize land conservation

projects. Since we seek to preserve permanently the most critical natural open space in the Bowl (and more generally in the Southcentral region), we are now analyzing the habitat and community preference data to identify the areas in the Bowl which are most critical for both people and wildlife species. These are the places that the Trust will focus on and conserve through collaborative efforts with willing landowners.

### *Acknowledgements*

The Trust would like to express its sincere thanks to the authors of this report, Ray Burger, Evie Witten, Abby Wyers, Anne Winther, and the members of the Municipality of Anchorage's Department of Community Planning and Development who provided invaluable technical assistance. In addition, the Trust is indebted to the numerous scientists who gave of their time to assist the Trust in compiling the biological survey information. The Trust is similarly grateful to many members of the public who identified numerous significant natural open spaces in the Bowl and shared how the community uses and values these places.

Support for this project came from the generous donations of the Great Land Trust's members, Alaska Conservation Foundation, the Environmental Protection Agency, Alaska Pacific University, the Anchorage Daily News, and the Alaska Fund for the Future. Technical support was provided by the Municipality of Anchorage. The Trust greatly appreciates the Municipality's in kind contributions towards this project.

## **PART 1: BIOLOGICAL DATA ON WILDLIFE HABITAT IN THE ANCHORAGE BOWL**

### **METHODS FOR BIOLOGICAL HABITAT SURVEY:**

#### *Wildlife Habitat and Significant Natural Features*

Little information about wildlife habitat within the Anchorage Bowl is recorded in reports or maps. Lacking existing studies to compile, the Great Land Trust used a key-informant method to interview local biologists who provided information on wildlife habitat and other biological values. Interviews were conducted between September 1998 and September 1999. Thus, much of the information represents the professional knowledge of local experts, but is not in all cases the product of scientific studies and may not be complete across the planning area. The planning area is the Anchorage Bowl, bounded by Elmendorf Air Force Base, Fort Richardson, Chugach State Park, and Cook Inlet.

During key-informant interviews, habitat maps were created using a mylar sheet over a 1" to 2400' scale aerial orthophoto base map. Habitat areas were recorded directly on the mylar and were later digitized into a Geographic Information System (GIS).

Wildlife habitats were coded as either critical or important based on information provided by key informants including sensitivity during different life stages, interdependence of species (e.g. songbird and shorebird habitat areas are also birds of prey habitat areas), current status within the Anchorage Bowl and/or sensitivity of species to disturbance.

The key informants who contributed their knowledge to this project include:

Nancy Tankersley-Fair, Rick Sinnott, Stewart Seaburg & Barry Stratton – Alaska Department of Fish & Game  
Karen Laing, Maureen DeZeeuw, Brad Andres - U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Thede Tobish - Municipality of Anchorage  
Bob Dittrick - Alaska Department of Natural Resources  
Catherine Moncrieff, Bob Shipley & Julius Rockwell – Anchorage Waterways Council  
Heather Dean -U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.  
Collen Handel, Lee Tibbets & Bob Gill – U.S. Geological Survey  
Chris Balliet – Center for Marine Conservation  
Rob DeVelice – U.S. Forest Service  
Jerry Tande & Rob Lipkin - Alaska Natural Heritage Program  
Verna Pratt - Alaska Native Plant Society

The GIS database created during this project was generated at the Alaska Pacific University GIS lab and is housed at the MOA Department of Community Planning and Development. This report and the accompanying maps and database provide information that can be amended as new information becomes available.

### **SUMMARIES OF MAPPING RESULTS & INTERVIEWS**

Definitions:

- Critical Habitat includes habitat necessary to maintain a viable local population of a particular species or species group. These include habitat for species that are regionally rare or in decline, and/or for species that are sensitive to disturbance during one or more of their life stages.
- Important Habitat areas are not critical to the maintenance of viable local populations of a species or species group, but provide general habitat. The loss of small, individual parcels containing important habitat may not threaten local populations, but cumulative losses may constitute a threat to local populations.

## A. Pacific and Common Loon Habitats

Primary Source: Nancy Tankersley-Fair - Alaska Department of Fish & Game

Interview date: 11/17/98

While all five species of loon live and breed in Alaska, only Pacific loons and common loons reside in Anchorage, and their population is declining. Currently Pacific loons are nesting on four lakes within the Anchorage Bowl, while there are no longer any common loons nesting within the Bowl (the nearest are found on the military bases). Pacific and Common loon habitats were mapped according to the following categories:

- **Pacific Loon Nesting Areas**-include water bodies where Pacific loons nest and a 100' buffer around the water bodies. (Buffers are included because loons are sensitive to disturbance while nesting. In some cases buffers may not be natural habitat.)
- **Potential Pacific Loon Nesting Areas**-historical nesting areas for Pacific loons and where potential for future nesting still exists.
- **Potential Common Loon Nesting Areas**-historical nesting areas for common loons and where potential for future nesting still exists.
- **Sensitive Areas**-include loon nesting and nursery areas that are especially sensitive to disturbance.  
**Notes:** Critical Loon Habitat-includes all water bodies, buffered areas and sensitive areas where Pacific loons nest.  
Important Loon Habitat-includes all potential loon nesting areas.

### Interview summary:

Most of the information conveyed during key informant interviews is captured on the Pacific and Common Loon Habitat map. Additional information is summarized below:

- More Anchorage area lakes historically provided nesting habitat for loons. Few historical nesting records exist.
- Loons are especially sensitive to disturbance during nesting.
- Anchorage's current nesting population of Pacific loons is small, and threatened by increasing development and activity around lakes.
- Common loons prefer to nest on larger lakes and seem to be disappearing as a nesting species in the Anchorage Bowl. Successful common loon nesting habitat in the Anchorage area is now only on Elmendorf Air Force Base (AFB) and Fort Richardson.

### Supporting Document:

Fair, J. 1998. *The Status of Loons in Anchorage & the Lower Matanuska-Susitna Valley of Alaska; A Summary Report of Alaska Loon Watch 1985-1997*. Prepared for Anchorage Audubon Society & the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. by Jeff Fair, Fairwinds Wildlife Services, February 24, 1998. 36 pp.

## **B. Critical Waterfowl Habitats**

*Primary Sources: Karen Laing, Maureen DeZeeuw, Brad Andres - USFWS; Thede Tobish - Municipality of Anchorage.*

*Interview Dates: 10/29/98, 11/10/98, 12/8/98, 12/16/98*

Waterfowl are a large group including ducks, geese, and mergansers. While most are migratory, there are some that reside year round in Anchorage. Only critical waterfowl habitats were mapped. Additional waterfowl habitats exist within the Anchorage Bowl, but none are critical or important for maintaining local waterfowl populations. Waterfowl habitats were mapped according to life stages and habitat characteristics, in the following categories:

- **Waterfowl Migration & Molting Habitat**
- **Waterfowl Nesting Habitat**
- **High Diversity Areas** support a high diversity of waterfowl species.
- **Waterfowl Winter Habitat** includes areas where water remains open in winter.
- **Estuarine Areas** include seeps and other sources of fresh water along the coast that are free of ice early in the spring and provide unique, rich habitats.

### **Interview Summary:**

Information conveyed during key informant interviews but not captured on the Critical Waterfowl Habitats map, is summarized below:

Waterfowl Species Lists by Area:

1. **Coastal Areas:** Snow Goose, Canada Goose, Greater White-Fronted Goose, Green-winged Teal, Mallard, Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Greater Scaup, Common Goldeneye, 'Thule' White-Fronted Goose, Snow Goose (Wrangel Island population)
2. **Potter Marsh:** Red-necked Grebe, Horned Grebe, Wigeon, Canada Goose, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Greater Scaup, Mallard
1. **Klatt Bog:** Mallard, Canada Goose, American Wigeon, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Greater Scaup
1. **Taku Lake, Campbell Lake:** Green-winged Teal, Mallard, Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, American Wigeon, Greater Scaup, Common Goldeneye, Red-necked Grebe, Gadwall
2. **Jewel Lake Wetland Complex:** Snow Goose, Canada Goose, Greater White-Fronted Goose, Green-winged Teal, Mallard, Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Greater Scaup, Common Goldeneye, Red-necked Grebe
3. **DeLong Lake Bog:** Mallard, Northern Pintail, American Wigeon, Red-necked Grebe
4. **Connors Bog:** Green-winged Teal, American Wigeon, Red-necked Grebe, Canada Goose, Mallard, Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, Greater Scaup
5. **Chester Creek Winter Areas:** Mallard, Barrow's Goldeneye, Common Goldeneye, Common Merganser
6. **Goose, University, Jones, Little Campbell, and Cheney Lakes and East and Westchester Lagoons:** Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Red-necked Grebe, Greater Scaup, Northern Pintail, Mallard, American Wigeon, Northern Shoveler, Green-winged Teal, Canada Goose

7. **Ship Creek Greenbelt:** Barrow's Goldeneye, Common Goldeneye, Common Merganser, Harlequin Duck, Mallard
8. **Baxter Bog and Business Park Wetlands:** Red-necked Grebe, Horned Grebe, Mallard, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, American Wigeon, Common Goldeneye, Greater Scaup, Canada Goose

**Supporting Documents:**

Brann, D.L. and B.A. Andres. 1998. *Breeding Bird Inventory of Select Anchorage Municipal Lands, Final Report*. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Nongame Migratory Bird Management. Prepared for Anchorage Audubon Society.

Hogan, M. and G.F. Tande, 1983. *Vegetation Types and Bird Use of Anchorage Wetlands*. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Special Studies Rep. 134 pp. and appendices.

### **C. Shorebird Habitats**

*Primary Sources: Lee Tibbets & Bob Gill - USGS, Biological Resources Division, Alaska Biological Science Center; Thede Tobish - Municipality of Anchorage.*

*Interview Date: 12/16/98*

Shorebirds are a large group including sandpipers, plovers, phalaropes, and snipe among others. For purposes of this map, gulls, terns, and cranes are also included here. Those species found within the Anchorage Bowl are listed at the end of this section. While shorebird numbers are highest during the spring and fall migration, members can be found in the Bowl from April to September. Shorebird habitats were mapped according to the following categories:

- **Shorebird Nesting and Brood Rearing Habitat**
- **Shorebird Migration Habitat**-used by shorebirds for staging, feeding and resting during spring and fall migrations.
- **High Diversity Areas**-used by a high number of shorebird species.
- **Estuarine Areas**-include seeps and other sources of fresh water along the coast that are ice-free early in the spring and provide unique rich habitats.
- **Brood Corridors**-used by shorebirds to move their flightless broods to wetter areas after nesting.
- **Critical Shorebird Habitat**-includes larger, contiguous habitat areas, and all brood corridors.
- **Important Shorebird Habitat**-includes smaller habitat areas.

#### **Interview summary:**

Information conveyed during key informant interviews but not captured on the Shorebird Habitats map, is summarized below:

- The ponds within the south Anchorage Coastal Refuge host the highest number of shorebird broods locally.
- In the north coastal area adjacent to the Tony Knowles Coastal Trail, shorebird staging does not appear to be affected by current public use.
- The majority of (sometimes whole) population of Hudsonian Godwits and Short-billed Dowitchers stage in the north coastal area in some years.
- Probably the only Hudsonian Godwit nest in the Anchorage Bowl is in Turnagain Bog.
- Increasing development during the past few years has affected shorebird brood moving between all Anchorage wetlands except within the Campbell Tract.
  - The number of Greater Yellowlegs is dropping in Connors Bog. There were 6-8 pairs, now there is only one pair. These pairs nest around Strawberry and Blueberry Lakes and walk their broods to Connors Bog. The drop in the number of pairs present may be due to development that has blocked their route for walking their broods to Connors Bog.
- USGS has been banding shorebirds in Anchorage for the last four years. Staff have found that shorebirds are very faithful to their feeding and nesting areas, and that some birds will use the same small depression nests as in previous years.
- Shorebirds need relatively large habitat areas for nesting and are experiencing a loss of habitat and corridors locally.

- Spring migration extends from early April to mid-May while fall migration includes the period from early July to mid-September.

### **Shorebird Species List by Map Category or Area:**

1. **Brood Corridors:** Species include Greater Yellowlegs, Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpipers, Common Snipe, Least Sandpiper
2. **Critical Habitat Areas:** Short-billed Dowitcher, Long-billed Dowitcher, Red-necked Phalarope, Common Snipe, Least Sandpiper, Black-bellied Plover, American Golden Plover, Pacific Golden Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, Greater Yellowlegs, Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpiper, Wandering Tattler, Spotted Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Whimbrel, Hudsonian Godwit, Black Turnstone, Surfbird, Sanderling, Western Sandpiper, Baird's Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper and Dunlin, Bonaparte's Gull, Mew Gull, Herring Gull, Glaucous-winged Gull, Arctic Tern, Sandhill Crane
3. **Potter Marsh:** Short-billed Dowitcher, Greater Yellowlegs, Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Common Snipe, Red-necked Phalarope, Semipalmated Plover, Spotted Sandpiper
4. **Klatt Bog:** Sandhill Crane, Short-billed Dowitcher, Red-necked Phalarope, Least Sandpiper, Lesser Yellowlegs, Common Snipe, Semipalmated Plover, Mew Gull, Herring Gull, Glaucous-winged Gull, Arctic Tern
5. **Jewel Lake Wetland Complex:** Mew gull colony, Short-billed Dowitcher, Red-necked Phalarope, Least Sandpiper, Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpiper, Common Snipe, Herring Gull, Glaucous-winged Gull, Arctic Tern
6. **Baxter Bog:** Semipalmated Plover, Lesser Yellowlegs, Least Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher, Common Snipe, Red-necked Phalarope, Mew Gull
7. **Connors Bog:** Short-billed Dowitcher, Red-necked Phalarope, Least Sandpiper, Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpiper, Common Snipe, Mew Gull, Herring Gull, Glaucous-winged Gull, Arctic Tern
8. **Little Campbell Lake Wetland:** Solitary Sandpiper
9. **Turnagain Bog:** Common Snipe, Hudsonian Godwit, Least Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher, Red-necked Phalarope, Lesser Yellowlegs
10. **Far North Bicentennial Park:** Greater Yellowlegs, Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpiper, Common Snipe, Least Sandpiper
11. **Ruth Arcand Wetland, Wetland 80 and adjacent wetlands:** Common Snipe, Lesser Yellowlegs
12. **Point Woronzof:** Solitary Sandpiper, Semipalmated Plover, Lesser Yellowlegs, Greater Yellowlegs, Spotted Sandpiper
13. **Business Park Wetlands:** Mew Gull, Lesser Yellowlegs, Short-billed Dowitcher, Red-necked Phalarope, Common Snipe, Least Sandpiper
14. **Exxon Pond:** Glaucous-winged Gull, Killdeer
15. **Taku Lake:** Lesser Yellowlegs, Greater Yellowlegs, Spotted Sandpiper, Solitary Sandpiper
16. **Campbell Lake:** Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher, Semipalmated Plover
17. **John's Park:** Common Snipe

18. **University Area:** Lesser Yellowlegs, Common Snipe, Red-necked Phalarope, Short-billed Dowitcher, Spotted Sandpiper, Solitary Sandpiper

Summary of Brood Movements in Anchorage Bowl:

<u>From:</u>	<u>To:</u>	<u>Species:</u>
• Klatt and Connors	S. Anchorage Coastal Refuge	L. Yellowlegs
• Wetland 69, Hanshew J.H.S.	S. Anchorage Coastal Refuge	L. Yellowlegs & others
• Bear Valley	Wetland 80	Common Snipe, L. Yellowlegs
• Goldenview/Hillside	Potter Marsh & S. Coastal Refuge	L. Yellowlegs & others
• Strawberry/Blueberry Lakes	Connors Bog	*see below
• Far North Bicentennial Park, Campbell Tract	Wetter areas w/in same area	*see below
• Pt. Woronzof Park area	Bluff below	*see below

\* Species include: Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpipers, Common Snipe, Least Sandpipers.

**Supporting Documents:**

Brann, D.L. and B.A. Andres. 1998. *Breeding Bird Inventory of Select Anchorage Municipal Lands, Final Report*. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Nongame Migratory Bird Management. Prepared for Anchorage Audubon Society.

Hogan, M. and G.F. Tande, 1983. *Vegetation Types and Bird Use of Anchorage Wetlands*. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Special Studies Rep. 134 pp. and appendices.

## D. Songbird Habitats

*Primary Source: Colleen Handel - USGS, Biological Resources Division, Alaska Biological Science Center*

*Interview Date: 1/27/99*

Songbird species groups can be defined by the habitat that they use. The species that use each habitat are listed below within each category of habitat mapped.

- **White spruce/ paper birch Habitat:** Indicates areas with mature white spruce and paper birch forests that provide habitat for the following songbirds: Townsend's Warbler\*, Swainson's Thrush, Hermit Thrush, Varied Thrush\*, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Brown Creeper\*, White-winged Crossbill, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Gray Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Pine Grosbeak, Three-toed Woodpecker, Dark-eyed Junco. (*Note: Large tracts of undisturbed habitat as well as forested remnants found in residential areas are both included in this category. Some species may be found only in undeveloped, large areas.*)
- **Mature Black Cottonwood Habitat:** Indicates areas with mature black cottonwoods used by the following songbirds: Alder Flycatcher, Brown Creeper\*, Northern Waterthrush\*, Orange-crowned Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, Swainson's Thrush, Hermit Thrush, Blackpoll Warbler\*. (*Note: Cover of black cottonwood is discontinuous within delineated areas.*)
- **Mixed Forest with Freshwater Seeps:** Indicates mixed needleleaf and broadleaf forest with seeps providing habitat for the following songbirds: Olive-sided Flycatcher\* Western Wood-Pewee\*, Alder Flycatcher, Tree Swallow, Violet-green Swallow, Rusty Blackbird, Northern Waterthrush\*, White-crowned Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Yellow Warbler, Savannah Sparrow, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Orange-crowned Warbler, Swainson's Thrush, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Dark-eyed Junco, American Robin, Yellow Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler\*.
- **Wetland Habitat:** Includes all wetland vegetation types that provide habitat for the following songbirds: Olive-sided Flycatcher\*, Western Wood-Pewee\*, Alder Flycatcher, Tree Swallow, Violet-green Swallow, Rusty Blackbird, Northern Waterthrush\*, White-crowned Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Yellow Warbler, Savannah Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, American Dipper, Golden-crowned Kinglet\*, Varied Thrush\*, Boreal Chickadee\*, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, White-winged Crossbill, Orange-crowned Warbler.
- **Shrub Habitat:** Includes coastal shrubs that provide habitat for the following songbirds: Lincoln's Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Wilson's Warbler, Song Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Yellow Warbler, and Orange-crowned Warbler.
- **Critical Habitat** includes larger contiguous wetland and forested areas, creek greenbelts, and all wetlands with high ecological values.

- **Important Habitat** areas include the more fragmented wetland and forested areas and wetlands with lower ecological values.

*\*Listed as Species of Special concern by the Neotropical Migratory Bird Working Group, Alaska Region, South Coastal List (1999).*

### **Interview Summary:**

Information conveyed during key informant interviews but not captured on the Songbird Habitats map, is summarized below:

#### Seasonal Use of Habitats:

- The summer breeding season extends from early May through late July.
- Fall migration occurs from the end of July through October.
- The largest number of songbirds and greatest diversity of species occur during breeding season, but large numbers of songbirds also move through during fall migration.
- During winter, species diversity decreases and larger tracts become more important for finding food. Songbirds are more reliant on larger habitat areas in winter.

#### Size and Connectivity of Habitats:

- Larger tracts, especially those that have streams, are extremely important for landbirds. Songbirds need the natural flow, meanders and integrity of streams because:
  - Diverse plant communities along natural streams provide protection from predators, and feeding and nesting habitats.
  - Natural stream meanders maintain a diversity of insects, which are dependent on different or varied habitats and/or stream flow levels.
- To maintain songbird populations, there must be vegetated corridors and connections between habitats and those connections must be sufficiently wide to buffer habitat.
- Breaks in habitat areas, such as roads and other developments may act as barriers and disrupt how forest birds establish breeding and wintering territories. Unless a wide enough corridor of trees is left, many parks currently providing songbird habitat will become isolated islands.
- The Chester Creek corridor is generally too narrow for some species, including Swainson's Thrush, which are found in surrounding habitats.
- The local robin population is increasing because robins adapt well to habitat fragmentation while many other species don't. Anchorage will experience changes in local species composition as development continues to fragment habitat.

#### Songbirds requiring large tracts of habitat:

- Olive-sided Flycatcher, Western Wood-Pewee, Northern Waterthrush, Townsend Warbler (*all are species of Special concern by the Neotropical Migratory Bird Working Group, Alaska Region, South Coastal List (1999).*).

Importance of shrub layer:

- Clearing understory vegetation disrupts breeding success of many bird species that use the coastal shrub habitats for forage on the ground.
- To maintain local songbird populations, we must retain the full structural integrity of forested areas.

Species that use coastal shrub habitat and sub-alpine areas in Chugach State Park and the military lands adjacent to the Bowl:

- American tree sparrow, Fox sparrow, Lincoln sparrow
- Area populations may intermix for breeding. The young disperse but movement patterns are unknown. Maintaining habitat across the region may be important for maintaining genetic diversity.

### **Supporting Documents:**

Brann, D.L. and B.A. Andres. 1998. *Breeding Bird Inventory of Select Anchorage Municipal Lands, Final Report*. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Nongame Migratory Bird Management. Prepared for Anchorage Audubon Society.

Hogan, M. and G.F. Tande, 1983. *Vegetation Types and Bird Use of Anchorage Wetlands*. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Special Studies Rep. 134 pp. and appendices.

Neotropical Migratory Bird Working Group. 1999. *Alaska Region, South Coastal List*.

Municipality of Anchorage. 1996. *Anchorage Wetland Management Plan, Ten-year revision*. Department of Community Planning and Development. Municipality of Anchorage. 220 pp.

USGS (1997). *Alaska Off-Road Breeding Bird Survey. Boreal Partners in Flight*. Alaska Biological Science Center. Internet site found at:  
<http://www.absc.usgs.gov/research/bpif/OBS/database/region.idc>

## **E. Birds of Prey Habitats**

*Primary Sources: Bob Dittrick - AK Dept. of Natural Resources, Brad Andres - USFWS, Rick Sinnott - Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Thede Tobish - Municipality of Anchorage.*

*Interview Dates: 10/29/99, 12/8/98, 1/11/99, 5/2/99*

Birds of Prey include owls, eagles, hawks, and falcons. Species groups are defined by habitats including:

- **Nesting Habitat:** These mature white spruce and paper birch forests provide habitat for the following birds of prey: Northern Shrike, Merlin, Goshawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Saw-whet Owl and Boreal Owl. Both undeveloped and fragmented tracts of forest habitat are included. Nesting Boreal Owls and Saw-whet Owls probably do not occur in smaller, fragmented areas.
- **Northern Harrier Habitat:** Includes Northern Harrier nesting habitat. On rare occasions Short-eared Owls also nest in these areas.
- **Birds of Prey Migration Habitat:** The following species use these areas for migration: Merlin, Northern Harrier, Short-eared Owl, Peregrine Falcon, Rough-legged Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk and Bald Eagle.
- **Bald Eagle Roosts, Perches and Winter Use Areas:** *Note: There are 12 known bald eagle nests in the Anchorage Bowl. To protect nest sites, locations are not identified or displayed. Additional roost and perch sites likely exist in the Anchorage coastal areas, however their exact locations are not known.*
- **Critical Habitat** includes coastal migration habitat, greenbelt corridors and larger, un-fragmented tracts of habitat.
- **Important Habitat** includes the more fragmented forested and wetland tracts of habitat.

### **Interview Summary:**

Information conveyed during key informant interviews but not captured on the Birds of Prey Habitats Map, is summarized below:

- Northern Shrikes are generalists and use a variety of habitats. The species is uncommon to rare in the Anchorage Bowl.

### Falcons:

- Merlin are migratory, can be found staging and feeding on shorebirds in all shorebird-breeding and staging habitats in the Anchorage Bowl. Merlin use wide open habitats in Anchorage Bowl, including open wetlands, mudflats, and treeline, where they feed on songbirds.
- Peregrine Falcons migrate through Anchorage in September and in March and April. The winter population of Peregrine Falcons commonly occurs at Ship Creek bridge in winter where they feed on pigeons. Peregrine Falcons leave the Anchorage Bowl during summer for large rivers in the North, such as the Yukon.
- Gyrfalcons are rare breeders in the Chugach Mountains. A few winter in the Anchorage Bowl where they feed on pigeons and waterfowl, mainly in the downtown area.

### Accipiters:

- Goshawks & Sharp-shinned Hawks are both heavily dependent on other birds for prey and need bigger forested tracts. Goshawks and Sharp-shinned Hawks can eat 3-4 songbirds each a day. Goshawks also prey on hares in the summer. Unlike falcons these birds cut through vegetation, and need large areas of contiguous woods for hunting. A few Goshawks winter here and use the same habitats in winter as in summer. Sharp-shinned Hawks migrate in the end of March and April and in September.
- Osprey very rarely occur in the Bowl.
- Harriers nest mainly above treeline, and feed on shorebirds and microtenes during migration.
- Rough-legged Hawks do not nest in the Anchorage Bowl, but are regular migrants.
- Red-tailed Hawks are common migrants through the Anchorage area. In summer they are in woodlots with big trees next to meadows. They like edges - any area with a combination of woods and meadow or wetlands, and prefer to put nests within 100 yards of an edge.

Nocturnal Raptors:

- Great Horned Owls are year round residents in the Anchorage Bowl. They use the same habitats as Red-tailed Hawks, but are a little less dependent on open woods.
- Boreal Owls prefer mature spruce and mixed forest with a meadow nearby, and need somewhat open forest areas. Boreal Owls nest in tree cavities.
- Saw-whet Owls have moved into the Matanuska Valley but historically were only sighted as farth north as Potter Marsh. There has been increased nesting success in the Anchorage Bowl. A limiting factor for Saw-whet and Boreal Owls nesting is the availability of nest cavities. Saw-whet Owls migrate.
- Short-eared Owls are fairly rare in the Bowl, where a few pair nest occasionally.

**Supporting Document:**

N/A

## F. Fish Habitats

*Primary Sources for fish info: Stewart Seaburg, Barry Stratton - Alaska Department of Fish & Game.*

*Source for Beluga info: Chris Balliet - Center for Marine Conservation*

*Interview Dates: 1/28/99, 10/7/99*

All five species of salmon are found in the Anchorage Bowl in various life stages. Three-spined and nine-spined sticklebacks, sculpin and freshwater resident and anadromous Dolly Varden may also be present in all streams in the Anchorage Bowl. Chinook and Coho salmon, rainbow trout and Arctic char are stocked in area lakes and streams. Introduced species in area lakes and streams include Northern pike and Alaska black fish. Fish habitats were mapped according to life stages in the following categories:

- **Anadromous Fish Habitat:** Where any of 5 species of salmon occur.
- **Spawning Habitat:** Where any of 5 species of salmon spawn.
- **Rearing Habitat:** Where any of 5 species of salmon live during juvenile life stage.
- **Overwintering Habitat:** Where fish live during winter in fresh-water.
- **Stocked by ADF&G:** Lakes stocked for sport-fishing.
- **\*Beluga Feeding:** Where Beluga whales feed on salmon from early July to early October.
- All creeks and lakes with native anadromous fish populations are considered critical habitat. The Beluga feeding area is critical habitat for the Cook Inlet population of Beluga whales.

*\*Beluga whales are included on the Fish Habitats map for ease of display and because they feed on fish within the study area.*

### **Interview Summary:**

Information conveyed during key informant interviews but not captured on the Fish Habitats map, is summarized below by creek:

#### Ship Creek:

- There is significant concern that the present 25-foot setback requirement for creeks is inadequate to protect the health of fish populations. Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) recommends a 100-200 foot setback for salmon habitat.
- In the 1920's and 1930's, Ship creek was a large producer of Chinook salmon, but the dams decimated this and other wild runs.
- The sport fishery, the second largest in the state, occurs between Chugach Dam and the creek mouth. Given the amount of industrial development and impacts to the creek, it is notable that natural fish runs still exist.
- The lower reaches of the creek are the most damaged, mostly below the Glenn Highway. ADF&G is planning several restoration projects. Upstream from the Chugach Dam the creek is relatively natural, except for the golf course.
- Water withdrawal for city use causes the creek to run dry in some areas in winter. The low winter water levels threaten fish and more water volume would be beneficial.

Chester Creek:

- Westchester lagoon was built in early 1970's. Previously, Chester Creek was a very polluted sewage lagoon, and salmon runs were discounted.
- Wild Pink and Chinook salmon historically were present in Chester Creek. The lack of fish passage at the Westchester Lagoon weir remains a problem for restoring wild runs.
- Greenbelt areas help protect the creek, but channelized stretches along its entire length have increased gradient and caused losses in diversity of plants, insects and fish and diminished the complexity of the ecosystem.

Fish Creek:

- Historically, there were healthy Coho runs in Fish Creek and important wetland habitats for rearing, but both have disappeared. At present, Coho usually don't go above tidal influence unless spawning in the lower reaches.

Hood Creek:

- A series of storm drain outfalls created water quality runoff problems in Hood Creek.

Campbell Creek:

- At Dowling Road and downstream, storm drains still drain directly into the creek, causing siltation problems. Upstream, water quality has been improved.

Little Campbell Creek:

- The preservation of all wetlands contiguous to the creek and the existing water quality conditions are necessary for the maintenance of fish rearing and feeding habitat. Feeding habitat includes the presence of macroinvertebrates in the creek. With no greenbelt, the pressures of urbanization continue to impact the creek.

Furrow Creek:

- No fish currently occur in Furrow creek. Its banks are badly damaged, and the upstream reach of the creek runs in a ditch.
- There are probably Coho rearing below the Cook Inlet bluff.
- The Anchorage Wildlife Refuge Management Plan has good documentation of this area.

Rabbit Creek:

- Where Rabbit Creek flows into Potter marsh is an important fish viewing area.
- Where Rabbit Creek crosses the Alaska Railroad tracks, New Seward Highway and Old Seward Highway, there are culvert drops that are an impediment or possible blockage to juvenile fish, depending on the level of the tide.

Little Rabbit Creek:

- The water withdrawal structure may cause water level fluctuations, which could negatively impact fish.
- Increasing development on the hillside may put pressure on this creek system.

Anchorage Bowl Fish Summary by Creek:  
(From interview and Stratton and Cyr, 1997)

Creek	Species	Life stage	Relative Abundance	Source
Ship	Chinook	spawn	250 goal	wild
	Chinook	smolt	210,000	hatchery
	Coho	spawn	250 goal	wild
	Coho	smolt	225,000	hatchery
	Chum		100	wild
	Pinks		>500	wild
	Dolly Varden		unknown	wild
	Rainbow trout		unknown	hatchery escapees
	Stickleback		unknown	
	Sculpin		unknown	
Chester	Coho	juveniles	unknown, few	Ft. Rich
	Dolly Varden		unknown	hatchery
	Rainbow trout		unknown	hatchery
	Coho	rear, spawn	<100	
	Stickleback		unknown	wild
	Sculpin		unknown	wild
Fish	Coho	rear, spawn	unknown	wild
	Dolly Varden		unknown	wild
	Stickleback		unknown	wild
	Sculpin		unknown	wild
Hood	Blackfish		unknown	wild
	Stickleback		unknown	wild
	Sculpin		unknown	wild
	Dolly Varden		unknown	wild
Little Campbell	Maybe Sockeye	rear	unknown	wild
	Coho	rear	unknown	wild
	Chinook	rear	unknown	wild
Creek	Species	Life stage	Relative Abundance	Source
Campbell	Coho	smolt	75,000	hatchery
	Coho	escapement	200 +1000	hatchery

	N. Pike		maybe		exotic
	Sockeye		500		wild, in N. Fork
	Chinook	spawn	500 ave/1200 high	wild	
	Pink		<100		wild
	Chum		<100		wild
	Dolly Varden	resident	anadromous		wild
	Stickleback		unknown		wild
	Sculpin		unknown		wild
Furrow					
	Coho	rear	unknown		wild
	No other fish				
Rabbit					
	Chinook	rear/spawn	<100		wild
	Coho	rear/spawn	100-250		wild
	Pink	spawn	unknown	wild	
	Dolly Varden		unknown		
	Stickleback		unknown		
	Sculpin		unknown		
Little Rabbit					
	Dolly Varden		unknown		wild
	Pink		unknown		
	Coho		100-250		wild
	Chinook		<100		wild
Potter					
	Coho		unknown		wild
	Pink		unknown		wild
Little survival					
	Coho				
	Pink	rear	unknown		wild
	Chinook	rear	unknown		wild
Campbell Lake					
	Sockeye	overwinter	unknown		wild
	Chinook	overwinter	unknown		wild
	Coho	overwinter	unknown		wild
	Pink		unknown		wild
	Sockeye			unknown	wild

**Supporting Document:**

Stratton, B. and P. Cyr. 1997. *Annual Management Report for the Anchorage Area, 1995. Fishery Management Report No. 97-1.* ADF&G. Division of Sport Fish. 98 pp.

## **G. Wetland and Riparian Areas**

*Primary Sources: Anchorage Wetland Management Plan (1996), Catherine Moncrieff, Bob Shipley and Julius Rockwell - Anchorage Waterways Council, Thede Tobish - Municipality of Anchorage, Heather Dean -U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.*

*Interview Dates: 11/17/98; 1/21/99*

Wetlands were mapped according to the following categories:

- **Critical Wetland Habitat** includes all “A” and “B” class wetlands identified in the Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan (1996), all creeks with a 100 foot buffer on each side, all wetlands directly adjacent to creeks, and selected “C” class wetlands as identified in the Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan. *Note: The 100 foot buffer on each side of the creeks is based on a goal for all riparian areas in the Anchorage Bowl that creek setbacks be standardized at 100 feet to maintain water quality, protect wildlife habitat and control floods. In some cases the mapped buffers may already be developed.*
- **Important Wetland Habitat** includes all other wetlands identified in the Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan (1996).

### **Interview summary:**

Information conveyed during key informant interviews but not captured on the Wetland and Riparian Areas Map, is summarized below:

- A goal for all Anchorage creeks is to remove culverts and restore channelized reaches.

#### Potter Marsh Watershed:

- Creeks and uplands in the south end play a key role in the entire watershed.
- Minimization of impervious surfaces is vital to minimize sedimentation, reduce runoff and maintain the water quality of Potter Marsh.

#### Furrow Creek Watershed:

- Many areas have been culverted and most wetlands have been filled during the last ten years.
- West of the Alaska Railroad tracks, little natural riparian zone remains and there are lawns up to the creek edge. A more vegetated greenbelt is needed.

#### Fish Creek Watershed:

- The estuary is a unique ecosystem and has diverse and important values, but needs to be restored. The culvert at tidewater and the weir need to be fixed to restore original conditions.
- Fish Creek is one of the Bowl's most altered creeks, but is still important to the community. The riparian zone contributes to the neighborhood quality of life.
- The watershed boundary has been expanded from old maps to include a larger area.
- There are still open channels, tributaries and important wetlands along Fish Creek.

- Headwaters are underground, but have potential for restoration and could be reconnected with the creek. The original source of the headwaters may be near a drumlin east of Lake Otis Parkway.

#### Hood Creek Watershed:

- Hood Creek is a small creek between Jones Lake and Cook Inlet.
- Piped recently due to flooding and icing problems in the neighborhood, and the riparian zone may be diminishing.

#### Ship Creek Watershed:

- Ship Creek needs a formal greenbelt with a 100-foot setback, but a 25-foot setback would be better than none. Setbacks should ideally extend through the military bases.
- Sections of the creek have been channelized and there are dams on the middle and upper part of the creek, but the headwaters are in a relatively natural state.
- The mouth of Ship Creek is an important fish habitat and a Beluga feeding area, and thus needs protection. The tidal restriction ideally should be removed from the mouth of the creek
- Chugach dam is no longer functional.
- Recommendations include putting the creek back in its natural channel where possible and removing riprap constrictions.
- There are severe bank erosion problems in Cottonwood Park.
- Sedimentation basins are needed at old storm drain sites that drain directly to creek.

#### Chester Creek Watershed:

- Has been put in an unnatural channel in some areas, but there are still many natural pockets, such as in the Tikishla Park area.
- Priorities for protection and restoration include riparian corridors, associated wetlands and headwaters on military land.
- Baxter Bog is a very important wetland within the watershed. Silver salmon spawn in the vicinity of Baxter Bog.
- For more information, contact Chester Creek working group-interagency effort headed by John Burns at US Army Corps of Engineers.

#### Campbell Creek Watershed:

- Campbell Creek watershed is the largest within the Anchorage Bowl, and it is healthy largely due to Campbell tract lands. It has the most complete greenbelt and setback in the city, and its headwaters are protected.
- Lower parts of creek are being impacted by storm drains, direct runoff, and road and parking lot sediments such as sand and silt.
- The section near Wickersham Park, between Lake Otis Parkway and the New Seward Highway

needs a wider vegetated greenbelt.

**Supporting Document:**

Municipality of Anchorage. 1996. *Anchorage Wetland Management Plan, Ten-year revision*.  
Department of Community Planning and Development. Municipality of Anchorage. 220 pp.

## **H. Brown Bear Sightings**

*Primary Source: Based on sightings documented by the Alaska Department of Fish & Game 1995-1998, and professional judgment of Rick Sinnott - Alaska Department of Fish & Game*

*Interview Dates: 11/10/98, 1/11/99*

There are estimated to be 5-10 brown bear in the Anchorage Bowl. Brown bear habitat was mapped according to frequency of documented sightings. To date, no studies have been completed of the areas brown bears use within the Anchorage Bowl. While **Frequent Brown Bear Sightings** and **Occasional Brown Bear Sightings** are the two categories mapped, rare sightings have occurred throughout the Anchorage Bowl.

Most habitat that is either critical or important for maintaining the local brown bear population exists within Chugach State Park, Far-North Bicentennial Park, the BLM Campbell Tract, Elmendorf Air Force Base and Fort Richardson. Greenbelts, parks and other wooded areas within the Anchorage Bowl provide habitat that could be important for brown bears.

### **Interview Summary:**

University of Alaska graduate student Chris Cleckner is studying black and brown bears in the Anchorage area. He has radio-collared bears and is tracking their seasonal movements within the region. He will have data available in 2000 that should be used to update the maps Rick Sinnott compiled for this project.

### **Supporting Document:**

N/A

## I. Black Bear Sightings

*Primary Source: Based on sightings documented by the Alaska Department of Fish & Game 1994-1998, and professional judgment of Rick Sinnott - Alaska Department of Fish & Game.*

*Interview Dates: 11/10/98, 1/11/99*

There are estimated to be 40-50 black bear in the Anchorage Bowl. Black bear habitat was mapped according to frequency of documented sightings. To date, no studies have been completed of the areas black bears use within the Anchorage Bowl. While **Frequent Black Bear Sightings** and **Occasional Black Bear Sightings** are the two categories mapped, rare sightings have occurred throughout the Anchorage Bowl.

Most habitat that is either critical or important for maintaining the local black bear population exists within Chugach State Park, Far-North Bicentennial Park, the BLM Campbell Tract, Elmendorf Air Force Base and Fort Richardson. Greenbelts, parks and other wooded areas within the Anchorage Bowl provide habitat that could be important for black bears.

### **Interview Summary:**

University of Alaska graduate student Chris Cleckner is studying black and brown bears in the Anchorage area. He has radio-collared bears and is tracking their seasonal movements within the region. He will have data available in 2000 that should be used to update the maps Rick Sinnott compiled for this project.

### **Supporting Document:**

N/A

## **J. Wolf Sightings**

*Primary Source: Based on sightings documented by the Alaska Department of Fish & Game and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management 1994-1998, and professional judgment of Rick Sinnott - Alaska Department of Fish & Game.*

*Interview Dates: 11/10/98, 1/11/99*

There are at least two packs (about 10 wolves) that traverse the Anchorage Bowl. Wolf habitat was mapped according to frequency of documented sightings. Both a wolf pack and a lone wolf constitute most regular sightings in and near the Anchorage Bowl. **Wolf Pack Sightings and Lone Wolf Sightings** are the two categories mapped.

Most habitat that is either critical or important for maintaining the wolf local population exists within Chugach State Park, Far-North Bicentennial Park, the BLM Campbell Tract, Elmendorf Airforce Base and Fort Richardson.

### **Interview Summary:**

To date, no studies have been completed of the areas wolves use within the Anchorage Bowl.

- Wolves are most often seen crossing roadways. Some people have also tracked local wolf packs.
- Wolves range throughout Chugach State Park, and each pack has its own territory.
- Just north of Anchorage, wolves are common everywhere that is wooded on Elmendorf AFB base, except for the most developed areas. They come down from the Chugach range to just north of the airfield on Elmendorf AFB.

### **Supporting Document:**

N/A

## **K. Beaver Habitat**

*Primary Source: Based on reports, aerial and ground surveys by the Alaska Department of Fish & Game, and professional judgment of Rick Sinnott - Alaska Department of Fish & Game.*

*Interview Date: 11/10/98*

Beavers number approximately 150 in the Anchorage Bowl. Areas were mapped as **Beaver Colonies** based on current use.

All colonies are considered important for maintaining local populations, and none are considered critical.

### **Interview Summary:**

N/A

### **Supporting Document:**

N/A

## **L. Moose Habitat**

*Primary Source: Based on professional judgment of Rick Sinnott - Alaska Department of Fish & Game.*

*Interview Dates: 11/10/98, 1/11/99*

There is no related map of moose habitat because moose are found throughout Anchorage. The population is estimated at 300 in summer and 1000 in winter within the Anchorage Bowl. Frequent Moose Sightings occur everywhere in the Anchorage Bowl except in the core of the downtown area and near runways at the Anchorage International Airport. Most habitat that is either critical or important for maintaining the local moose population exists within Chugach State Park, Far-North Bicentennial Park, the BLM Campbell Tract, Elmendorf Air Force Base and Fort Richardson. Greenbelts, parks and other wooded areas within the Anchorage Bowl also provide habitat that could be important and/or critical for moose.

### **Interview Summary:**

Information conveyed during key informant interviews is summarized below:

- It is difficult to map moose habitat in Anchorage because scientists do not know enough of the details about their movements and behavior in the urban environment. Moose are usually studied and tracked by biologists in low-flying aircraft. It is difficult to conduct that type of tracking study in an urban setting.
- Moose use greenbelts, bogs, and large open spaces. Anywhere that natural vegetation exists appears to be good or at least marginal urban moose habitat. The greenbelts provide moose refuge from people.
- ADF&G estimates the following:
  - Approximately 50 moose live in the Kincaid Park to Point Woronzof area.
  - Chester and Campbell creek greenbelts are important areas for moose in winter.
  - Moose may concentrate in the south end of Far North Bicentennial Park in the burn area.
  - Moose within the Anchorage Bowl do not seem to travel to specific calving grounds. We do know that moose calve in Kincaid park, on the hillside, within the greenbelts and in the Oceanview area.
  - Rutting occurs all over town in October. Some moose congregate on the hillside post-rut, but moose may also be found anywhere else in town after the rut.

### **Supporting Document:**

N/A

### **M. Wildlife Hazard Areas**

*Primary Sources: Rick Sinnott - Alaska Department of Fish and Game; Moose/Road conflicts based on reports documented by the Alaska Department of Fish & Game.*

*Interview Date: 11/10/98*

A wildlife hazards dataset and map has been created for planners and biologists to use in creating and managing natural opens spaces that are situated and designed to minimize conflicts between wildlife and people.

The following categories of conflicts between wildlife and people were mapped:

- **Geese/Airports:** Areas surrounding airports where Canada geese are actively excluded.
- **Brown Bear/Angler:** Area where conflicts between brown bears and anglers may occur.
- **Moose/Roads:** Areas where vehicles most frequently hit moose.

**Supporting Document:**

N/A

## **N. Canada Goose Habitat**

*Primary Sources: Karen Laing - USFWS, Rick Sinnott - Alaska Department of Fish & Game.*

*Interview Date: 11/10/98*

Recognizing public debate regarding the optimal size of the Canada Goose population (currently estimated at over 4000) in Anchorage, this map and data set were included for planners and biologists to use in creating and managing habitats that encourage and discourage various goose behaviors.

Canada Goose habitat was mapped according to the following life stages and categories:

- **Nesting** - occurs in May and June. Females are immobile while males fly in and out of nesting area.
- **Molting** - occurs in July. Canada Geese cannot fly during this time.
- **Feeding** - heaviest feeding times are during April, May and August. Spring feeding areas are a subset of fall feeding areas. Feeding areas are primarily lawns, not wooded areas.
- **Airport Exclusion Area** - indicates areas where Canada Geese are actively excluded by the Anchorage International Airport.
- *Note: The Canada Goose population in the Anchorage Bowl is currently at its largest in modern history. Anchorage residents and local, state and federal agencies are attempting to identify a socially optimal population size. No Canada Goose habitats in the Anchorage Bowl are considered critical for maintaining local populations. However, important habitat is found at Connors Bog, University Lake, the Sand Lake/Jewel Lake complex, Westchester Lagoon, and the coastal refuge from Potter Marsh to Point Campbell*

### **Interview Summary:**

Information conveyed during key informant interviews but not captured on the Canada Goose Habitat map, is summarized below:

- An annual management plan for Canada Geese is adopted annually by the Anchorage Waterfowl Working Group, a federal, state and local interagency group.
- Geese nest in areas that provide cover and camouflage, such as shrub-dominated wetlands.
- Large expanses of lawns, such as golf courses and ballfields attract large numbers of geese for feeding. Areas with lawns reaching down into water, such as at Westchester Lagoon, are especially attractive to geese.

### **Supporting Document:**

N/A

## **0. Significant Vegetation**

*Primary Sources: Rob DeVelice - USFS, Jerry Tande & Rob Lipkin - Alaska Natural Heritage Program, Verna Pratt - Alaska Native Plant Society.*

*Interview Dates: 5/15/99, 5/27/99*

No one has ever comprehensively mapped plant community types within the Anchorage Bowl. Several agencies and individual graduate students have studied and mapped vegetation within limited areas of the Bowl (see Supporting Documents below). However it is difficult to piece together these maps because each study focused on different objectives and used a different scale and plant classification scheme and significant portions of the Bowl have not been studied or mapped.

For this project, we attempted to map significant vegetation within the Anchorage Bowl by interviewing a group of botanists and plant ecologists. We asked the group to identify areas where regionally or locally significant, rare or threatened plant species or plant communities occur, and also to consider structural and species diversity within plant communities, and species' or communities' role in wildlife habitat.

From the interview we compiled a map using the following categories:

**Locally rare:** Species or plant communities that may be at the edge of their range, or locally or regionally rare.

**Harvest Areas:** Areas where native plants are collected for harvest.

**Species Rich Areas:** Areas where a high number of species occur.

Note: While the map captured some of the elements we intended to compile for use in natural open space planning in Anchorage, the depth and diversity of information varies. The mapped information is included in the GIS database of baseline information for natural open space planning housed at the MOA Department of Community Planning and Development. It can be amended as new information becomes available.

The following suggestions for further data collection were beyond the scope of this project, but would improve the vegetation data layer:

- Comprehensive vegetation mapping for the Anchorage Bowl would inform natural open space planning as well as urban wildlife habitat identification and management.
- More information about urban forest areas and significant street and park trees would improve the existing data set.
- Adding more information about plant harvest areas would improve the existing data layer.
- A careful and thorough integration of existing studies, matching scale and vegetation classification schemes would also improve the existing data layer.

**Interview Summary:**

- Mountain Hemlock (*Tsuga mertensiana*) does not grow much further north than the Anchorage Bowl; populations around Flattop may define the species' northern limits and be some of the biggest ones.
- Large mature black cottonwood (*Populus balsamifera* subsp. *trichocarpa*) stands at Kincaid Park and Far North Bicentennial Park, provide structural diversity which is significant within the Anchorage Bowl.
- *Puccinellia* spp. are on the USFS sensitive species list.
- *Puccinellia triflora* occurs at Potter Marsh
- *Puccinellia glabra* occurs at government dock, Ship Creek and Fish Creek
- *Carex parryana*- occurs on Knik flats
- Some Anchorage area bogs have *Malaxis paludosa* orchid. It used to seem more rare, but is now found more frequently in S. Central Alaska. Lake Otis and Tudor wetlands have *M. paludosa*, but these are likely drying up due to development.
- East of Muldoon, *M. paludosa* occurs on military lands. There are tracts of it on Chester Creek in area of map. It could also occur in other places within the Anchorage Bowl.
- Lady's Slipper orchids (*Cypripedium guttatum*) occur in Klatt and Connors Bogs. These are the only places in the Bowl where *C. guttatum* is known to exist. The species may have regional significance. It is not uncommon in the state, but is uncommon in Anchorage area. Kodiak and Sutton are the closest documented occurrences.
- There was a population of *C. guttatum* orchids at the Raspberry Road area of Connors Bog documented in 1983, at the cutline near Post Office. The area has dried out since 1983.
- *Carex ramenskii* is locally important because is at the edge of its range. The species is found at Westchester Lagoon near the footbridge on the east side of the Alaska Railroad tracks. *C. ramenskii* may occur elsewhere along the coast, but certainly is not common on the east side of Cook Inlet.
- Silverberry (*Elaeagnus commutata*) occurs near Northern Lights Blvd along the bluff and Coastal Trail by Earthquake Park. It is thought to be rare south of Eklutna.
- *Lysimachia thyrsoflora* occurs in pond at Pamela J. Lowry Park, off Strawberry Rd. The species is not rare, but has a scattered distribution. This is the only known occurrence within the Anchorage Bowl.
- Maroon *Sanguisorba officinalis* occurs in Klatt Bog, and is not known to occur elsewhere in the Anchorage Bowl.
- Klatt Bog has a unique species mix; it had a lot of patterned ground, ponds and raised areas, but the whole area has been drained.
- There are other patterned bogs in city. There is a small area near S. Bragaw extension. Strawberry Lake area is hummocky, but drying out. Connors Bog is not species rich.
- Southeast of Potter Marsh on south facing rocky slopes, there are rare and unique poplar stands. The area is behind a truck stop and extends through the McHugh Creek area. The dry, rocky area is south-facing and free of snow early. Species found in this area include: *Viola rotundiflora*, ferns (*Botrychium* spp.), *Draba* spp., and scattered *Populus* overstory. This is a very rich area. Many south-facing patches along the Chugach Range are similar. At Potter the area is close to the road and accessible, making it special.
- *Nymphaea tetragona* (dwarf water lily) occurs in the Goose Lake/Mosquito Lake area and is unique in the Anchorage Bowl.

- *Matteuccia struthiopteris* (ostrich fern) is at its southern extent in Anchorage Bowl. The species is significant because people harvest it. The Matanuska-Susitna Valley population is threatened by development and over-harvesting. This is a species about which to be concerned. The Mat-Su Valley may be the closest occurrence of this species.
- Pt. Campbell Dunes is a unique landform and may have unique species.
- *Caltha palustris* occurs at Potter Marsh and at Russian Jack Park.
- *Cicuta mackenzieana* only occurs at Potter Marsh within the Anchorage Bowl. It is not found at Ft. Richardson, but may occur at Palmer Hay Flats. The species is unique for the Bowl.
- Potter Marsh has a unique species mix including bulrush (*Scirpus spp.*) and other species.
- People gather *Caltha palustris* at Potter Marsh.
- Bulrush (*Scirpus spp.*) also occurs at Connors Bog.
- *Mimulus guttatus* occurs at Russian Jack Park and is not found other areas in the Bowl, but may occur on Turnagain Arm.
- *Viola rotundaflora* found in Russian Jack Park and other sites. It is also found in the woods along Turnagain Arm, but is locally unique because its range is generally much further north in the state.
- Goosetongue (*Plantago maritima*) occurs all along the tidal flats, but denser concentrations occur just off the bluff near Kincaid Park. People harvest this species, but it is not known how heavily it is harvested within the Anchorage Bowl.
- Other species harvested locally include ferns and nettles along the New Seward Highway and *Sedum spp.* at Arctic Valley.
- The coastal/salt marsh habitat is rare in Alaska and is therefore significant. Estuarine wetlands and associated plant communities are rare and very important. Estuarine habitat does not include Anchorage's whole mudflat area, only fresh brackish areas. These areas provide habitat for migrating Snow Geese and Cranes.
- *Puccinellia* flats along coast and freshwater input areas are rich areas and limited in size and extent.
- South facing bluffs along Ship Creek could have plant species of interest.
- Mountain Hemlock (*Tsuga mertensiana*) and *Menziesia ferruginea* occur in some wet areas in Muldoon Park and in Russian Jack Park. It is more unusual when occurring in urban areas.

### Supporting Documents:

Guyer, S. 1997. *Campbell Tract Ground Cover Classification Project*. Mapping Section. Alaska State Office. Bureau of Land Management.

Hogan, M. and G.F. Tande, 1983. *Vegetation Types and Bird Use of Anchorage Wetlands*. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Special Studies Rep. 134 pp. and appendices.

Klein, S.C. 1999. *Map of Forested Habitats in Anchorage's Parks and Greenbelts*. Alaska Natural Heritage Program. Environment and Natural Resource Institute. University of Alaska, Anchorage. 64 pp. and appendices.

Steer, M.A. 1999. *Wetland Characterization and Historic Loss in the Chester Creek Watershed*. GIS data and Master's Thesis. Alaska Pacific University. Anchorage, Alaska. 89 pp. and appendices.

## **P. Critical Habitat Areas**

Critical habitat is defined as habitat necessary to maintain a viable local population of the species or species group. These areas include habitat for species that are regionally rare or in decline, and/or for species that are sensitive to disturbance during one or more of their life stages.

Shorebirds, Songbirds, Waterfowl, Birds of Prey, Loons, and Fish are the six species groups that have critical habitat within the Anchorage Bowl. A map has been generated to display the critical habitat for these six species groups combined with critical wetland habitat.

## **PART 2: COMMUNITY PREFERENCE DATA**

### **INTRODUCTION**

To identify natural open spaces in the Anchorage Bowl that citizens value, the Great Land Trust and the Municipality of Anchorage held two public workshops, on May 25, 1999 and October 21, 1999 respectively. The objective of these workshops was to gather information on which open space areas Anchorage residents value and why. The workshops were publicized in the Anchorage Daily News and the Anchorage Journal of Commerce. Special invitations were distributed to members of the business community, Community Councils, community groups, and members of the Assembly.

During the workshops, more than 250 residents identified 139 natural areas they consider important and identified one of six categories of use as defined in the “Methods” section below. The public identified numerous uses for natural open space including as parks, greenbelts, outdoor recreation, fish and wildlife habitat, scenic viewsheds, buffers between incompatible uses, access to other natural areas, education and a variety of other reasons. Over 1000 specific comments were documented. These comments came from a broad spectrum of the community including realtors, architects, families, developers, members of the Assembly, community groups and Community Councils. Participants at the open houses represented almost every zip code in the Anchorage Bowl.

This summary reflects the community preference data GLT has gathered through November 15, 1999. The following describes themes that emerged from the public workshops, and includes a chart reflecting values the public assigned to each identified place as well as a summary of comments organized by location.

The comments contained herein reflect the views of members of the public regarding natural open space and particular parcels of land. The views expressed and recorded should not be attributed to the Great Land Trust.

### **METHODS**

At the public workshops trained facilitators documented both the location of parcels of open space the public identified as valuable and the reasons why the public valued those parcels. Community preference data was collected at four mapping stations that included two stations for North Anchorage and two stations for South Anchorage. The base map used was a black and white 1996 orthophoto at a scale of approximately 1”:1000’. Boundaries were drawn around open spaces on mylar overlays, regardless of land ownership. A color-coded sticker was used to attach specific values to geographic areas. Identified areas were numbered and written comments were recorded

The values placed on the land were grouped into the following categories:

Aesthetic Value: Includes areas residents value for aesthetic reasons including viewsheds and buffers between incompatible land uses.

Recreation Value: Includes areas residents use for dispersed recreation activities such as nordic-skiing, walking, or bird-watching.

Wildlife Habitat Value: Includes areas residents value because they provide wildlife habitat and opportunities to watch wildlife.

Access Value: Includes areas residents value because they provide links to other parklands, trails or other community assets.

Environmental Education Value: Includes areas residents value because they provide opportunities for outdoor and/or environmental education activities.

Other Values: Includes natural areas that residents value for any other reason (e.g. hydrological value).

The identified natural areas were further broken down into either Community or Neighborhood Natural Open Spaces for mapping purposes and ease of display. Community Natural Open Spaces include areas important to people throughout the community regardless of neighborhood of residence. These areas include large parks that are focal points for recreation, education and wildlife viewing, undeveloped parcels that add aesthetic value to major transportation corridors, and areas that provide ecological services for the whole community (e.g., creeks and associated greenbelts that help control floods and protect water quality). Neighborhood Natural Open Spaces include areas primarily important to residents of specific neighborhoods. These areas include parks and natural open spaces that add aesthetic value and provide a sense of place for neighborhoods, provide walk-to access to local parks, schools and community centers, and act as gathering places for local residents. Of course, since each identified location may be valued by the community as a whole, a parcel's classification should be regarded loosely.

Three maps present the compiled community preference data: Neighborhood Preferences for Natural Open Space, Community Preferences for Natural Open Space and Combined Community and Neighborhood Preferences for Natural Open Space. The combined map depicts all 139 areas identified as important and reflects which of the six qualities the public associated with each parcel.

## **THEMES FROM PUBLIC COMMENTS**

A number of general themes emerged from public comments about open space and with respect to the specific identified areas. In summary, public comments were as follows:

1. Residents expressed concern that development is outpacing open space protection in Anchorage.
2. There was a sentiment that every part of town should have significant parks and open space.
3. Midtown in particular was identified as needing additional parkland.
4. South Anchorage needs more trails and protected open space.
5. The public would like better access to the coast in South Anchorage.
6. Wildlife corridors in the city should be protected.

7. Contiguous greenbelts, not just discontinuous parcels, should be protected.
8. Tree planting and neighborhood-beautification efforts should be encouraged.
9. Anchorage should improve design standards for development.
10. More natural vegetation should be retained on developed sites.
11. Anchorage should be more pedestrian and bicycle friendly.
12. Parks would benefit from increased enforcement of regulations which promote protection of natural resources.
13. Anchorage needs a more connected trail system and better continuity between open spaces.

The public expressed special interest in the following areas among 139 identified natural open spaces:

**North Anchorage:**

Goose Lake/Alaska Pacific University  
Russian Jack Springs  
Chester Creek Greenbelt  
Cheney Lake  
Tudor/Muldoon Curve Wetlands (Scenic Foothills)  
Baxter Bog

**West Anchorage:**

Fish Creek  
Turnagain Bog  
Coastal Trail Corridor

**South Anchorage:**

Campbell Creek Greenbelt  
Klatt Bog  
South Coastal Corridor  
Sand/Sundi/Jewel Lakes  
Conners Bog  
DeLong Lake  
Kincaid Park

**Southeast Anchorage/Hillside:**

Far North Bicentennial Park  
Section 16/Ruth Arcand Park  
Rabbit Creek  
Little Rabbit Creek  
Elmore Creek/Wetland 80  
Section 36/South Hillside  
Potter Creek/Potter Marsh  
Huffman/Dearmoun School Site  
Little Survival Creek

**CHART OF VALUES ASSOCIATED WITH EACH IDENTIFIED NATURAL OPEN SPACE**

The following table summarizes the values that the public associated with each identified parcel.<sup>1</sup>

Parcel#	Recreation	Aesthetic	Access	Wildlife	Environmental Education	Other Values *	Community/ Neighborhood
1		yes	yes	yes		OH	N
2		yes		yes			N
3	yes		yes				C
4	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	H	C
5	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes		C
6	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	H	N
7	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes		C
8	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	H	C
9	yes						N
10	yes	yes	yes				N
11	yes	yes					N
12	yes		yes	yes		H	C
13	yes		yes	yes			N
14	yes		yes	yes			C
15	yes						N
16	yes			yes			N
17	yes	yes		yes			N
18			yes				N
19	yes	yes		yes			N
20	yes	yes	yes				N
21	yes	yes		yes	yes		N
22	yes						N
23	yes	yes		yes	yes		N
24	yes			yes			N
25	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	H	N
26			yes				N
27			yes	yes		H	N
28		yes					N
29	yes	yes		yes		H	N
30	yes			yes		O	N
31	yes			yes			N
32						O	N
33	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes		C
34				yes			C
35	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes		C
36	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	OH	C
37			yes				N
38	yes			yes			N
39			yes				N
40	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	H	C
41	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes		C
42	yes	yes	yes	yes			N
43		yes		yes			C
44				yes			N

<sup>1</sup> The last column also shows whether the parcel was displayed on the community or a neighborhood map. (The combined map shows all 139 parcels.) Readers are reminded that the community vs. neighborhood designation is loosely applied and each parcel may have characteristics such that it could be considered both a community and neighborhood resource.

Parcel#	Recreation	Aesthetic	Access	Wildlife	Environmental Education	Other Values *	Community/ Neighborhood
45		yes				O	N
46	yes	yes	yes	yes			N
47	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	H	C
48	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	H	C
49	yes	yes	yes				N
50	yes	yes	yes	yes		H	N
51	yes	yes		yes		O	N
52	yes	yes					N
53	yes		yes	yes			N
54				yes		H	N
55	yes		yes	yes			N
56	yes						N
57	yes						N
58	yes	yes		yes			C
59		yes		yes			C
60		yes		yes	yes	H	C
61	yes	yes		yes	yes		N
62	yes	yes	yes	yes			C
63	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes		C
64	yes	yes	yes				N
65	yes		yes	yes			N
66	yes	yes		yes	yes	OH	N
67	yes						N
68	yes		yes	yes			N
69	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	H	C
70	yes	yes	yes	yes		O	N
71				yes			N
72		yes					N
73	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes		N
74	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	H	C
75	yes	yes	yes	yes			C
76	yes	yes		yes			N
77	yes	yes		yes			N
78	yes	yes					N
79						H	N
80	yes		yes				N
81	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	H	C
82	yes	yes	yes	yes		H	N
83	yes	yes	yes				N
84	yes	yes	yes	yes			N
85	yes	yes	yes	yes			N
86	yes						N
87	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	H	C
88	yes	yes	yes	yes			C
89	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	H	C
90	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	H	N
91	yes	yes				O	N
92	yes	yes		yes	yes		C
93	yes	yes	yes	yes		H	N
94	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	H	C

Parcel#	Recreation	Aesthetic	Access	Wildlife	Environmental Education	Other Values *	Community/ Neighborhood
95	yes	yes				O	N
96	yes		yes				N
97	yes	yes	yes	yes			N
98	yes						N
99	yes			yes			N
100	yes	yes		yes	yes		N
101	yes	yes		yes			N
102	yes						N
103				yes			N
104		yes					C
105	yes	yes		yes	yes	OH	C
106	yes						N
107				yes	yes		N
108	yes	yes	yes	yes		OH	N
109	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	H	C
110				yes			N
111	yes	yes	yes	yes			N
112	yes		yes		yes		C
113	yes		yes	yes			C
114				yes		H	C
115		yes	yes				N
116		yes	yes	yes			N
117	yes	yes	yes				N
118	yes						N
119	yes			yes			N
120	yes		yes				N
121		yes	yes	yes			N
122				yes			N
123	yes	yes	yes	yes			N
124		yes	yes	yes			N
125		yes					N
126		yes				O	N
127		yes	yes				N
128	yes	yes		yes			N
129		yes					N
130	yes		yes		yes	O	N
131	yes			yes			N
132	yes	yes					N
133	yes	yes					N
134	yes	yes					N
135	yes	yes		yes			N
136	yes	yes	yes	yes			N
137	yes		yes				C
138	yes		yes				C
139	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	H	C

O = Other Value (see text for each parcel)

H = Hydrological Value

## **A SUMMARY OF COMMENTS ON NATURAL OPEN SPACE COMPILED BY LOCATION**

The following is a summary of comments offered by members of the public on each location. The comments are loosely grouped by topic if possible. On occasion, members of the public offered conflicting recommendations regarding how a site should be used or developed. In such cases both perspectives are included. As noted previously, the Great Land Trust is reporting these comments and the views expressed may not be shared by the Trust.

**1. South Fork Chester Creek:** Comments include aesthetic qualities, access, wildlife habitat and hydrologic and other values. The area was identified as University of Alaska (UAA) land. The need for an easement for future bike trails and greenbelt was expressed. If such a trail were to be built it would complete a trail loop around the University system.

The banks along the stream were identified as needing protection and the proposed University/Hospital changes were seen as an impact to this reach of Chester Creek. The area was also identified as relatively untouched and therefore an extremely valuable resource. It was expressed that it should not be disturbed. The proposed trail was also identified as likely to bring people to the area and by doing so destroying significant values.

The area downstream of the boundary was identified as municipal land. The creek area was identified as providing and protecting wildlife habitat in general and specifically for moose, lynx, spawning coho and containing many ecotypes.

**2. API/ Providence Buffer Area:** Comments described aesthetic qualities and wildlife habitat. It was identified as an area that provides a good buffer between institutions and subdivisions. It also has potential for a good walking trail and as important wildlife habitat.

**3. Tour of Anchorage (TOA) South Fork of Chester Creek Connection:** Comments include recreation and access. It was recorded that a link is needed between the Tour of Anchorage (TOA) trail and the South Fork of Chester Creek. An interconnection between the Anchorage pathway loop would eliminate the need to cross the streets. The strip along Tudor Road was identified as important for TOA access and concern was expressed that the trail route will be lost. The area was also identified as providing access to the Campbell Tract and includes the bridge across Tudor, which provides access and continuity. The trail needs a secure easement, however. Without protection, there could be a loss of continuity of the trail system. It has been identified that this trail is on PLI lands.

**4. University Lake Park:** Comments include recreation, wildlife habitat, aesthetics, access and education and hydrological values. It was identified that the area is already dedicated as University Lake Park. Activities such as dog walking and fishing are valued here and it was expressed that the area should remain a quiet area with no roads. The University Lake area is a valuable recreational area used heavily by local residents and university students year round. It is also a critical connector piece of the Hillside to Coastal Trail system. The integrity of this access should be protected as the uninterrupted trail system is a great amenity of Anchorage and is rarely present in any city.

The area provides waterfowl habitat. The eastern section was identified as critical for wildlife habitat, the shoreline important for over-wintering birds and moose. It is rich with wildlife, especially moose and water fowl. It provides a protected nesting area for grebes and loons. All of this area is important as moose corridors. Wetlands are important in an area surrounded by residences and light

commercial development. Wetland functions such as drainage and filtering are valued for this area. In addition, the area is used widely for outdoor science education due to its proximity to the Universities. Also because of its aesthetic values, this area provides for an “in town wilderness”. A large piece of open land right in the middle of town for walking, skiing, skijoring is a community asset.

**5. Goose Lake/ APU Woods:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic, access, wildlife habitat, environmental education and for other values. Wildlife habitat comments included that the area was a wildlife habitat corridor, a pair of loons nest on Goose Lake, the area North of the KSKA parking lot is known goshawk habitat, the area is home to lots of moose in summer and late winter. Waterfowl including ducks nest along the shoreline. Signs were put up for loons and shorebird protection.

A wide variety of recreation comments were collected for this area. People enjoy walking, moose watching, paddling, and running. Skiing and biking were noted as excellent and that unpaved trails are important. It was identified that the area is part of the designated "Iditarod Trail" and that it should remain as open space. It was also recorded that the Municipality should block walking along the shore and put up a fence to keep bikers from accessing the trail along the shore.

Aesthetic values such as solitude in the wetland area were identified as important. The Bragaw extension past University Drive to Northern Lights is not wanted. One comment concluded, "...To be in the woods in Anchorage, where the sound of the city roads fades into the background, it is great for the soul. Putting the road (Bragaw) through the Goose Lake Park will absolutely ruin the area forever." Open space in this area was noted as being important for neighboring subdivisions. The plantlife and wild flora and fauna are also valued for their aesthetic qualities.

Access to Russian Jack Park, Far North Bicentennial Park and Chester Creek was described as an important value for this area. This area was also cited as a potential connecting trail for the Tour of Anchorage (TOA) trail. The area is also used for environmental education. Other comments expressed concern for the water quality of Chester Creek. Goose lake and the area has runoff problems from neighbors and nearby businesses.

The Goose Lake/University Lake complex provides an “in town wilderness”. Area includes opportunities to run and walk and bird habitat (loon nesting, grebes, geese, ducks and other waterfowl.) The birds nest between Wedgeon Lane north to the open meadow where the bike trail views the lake. It is suggested the critical area be extended to include this area. This is a critical connector piece of the Hillside to Coastal Trail system. It was noted that this is a buffer corridor connecting Goose Lake Park with Russian Jack Park overpass and University Lake Park across UAA and APU land. This is a restorative, aesthetic area near health/educational services.

The integrity of this access should be protected as part of an uninterrupted trail system. This is part of a mapped orienteering area. There are important bike corridors to the universities, the APU nordic ski trails, skijoring and other travel on the trails, and multi-use trails for walking. Goose Lake has a good canoe practice area. Club classes held here for beginner canoe skills. Sea kayak symposia are held here or on the University Lake. This area is also an important moose corridor and provides open space.

Aesthetically, driving through this area is pleasant because it provides a break of trees between two densely built areas. These areas are particularly valuable for education in such fields as ecology, natural history, and outdoor science education because of the universities' proximity.

**6. Russian Jack/APU Connector:** Comments include recreation, wildlife habitat, aesthetic, educational as well as hydrological values. The trail provides access between the University and Russian Jack Park. The area was indicated as an important wetland area and wildlife habitat. It is a

vital link access to Chester Creek trail. The public would like to see link to overpass to APU/UAA over Northern Lights Blvd. Also, the area is as important as a headwaters and a flood control area for a tributary of Chester Creek from Russian Jack Park. This area provides a visual break of trees between two densely built areas. There are significant educational values for students attending universities nearby particularly for the study of ecology, natural history, outdoor science education.

Part of the mapped orienteering area. Important bike corridors to the universities. There are APU nordic ski trails, and opportunities for skijoring and walking. Canoe and kayaking training occurs here. Moose use the brushy areas. Loons, grebes, geese, ducks and other waterfowl nest here between Wedgeon Lane north to the open meadow where the bike trail views the lake.

**7. Russian Jack Springs Park:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic values, access, education and wildlife habitat. People use and value this area for activities such as skiing, walking and jogging. The area was indicated as important for moose, squirrels, rabbits and birds as well as plant viewing and an excellent location for leading educational groups. It was noted as a wildlife corridor.

**8. Chester Creek/Westchester Lagoon:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic values, access, wildlife habitat, environmental education, general comments and hydrological comments. The greenbelt and lagoon are valued open spaces used for year-round recreation including transportation, pleasant walks in the woods, skating in winter, windsurfing and birding. The wooded area with a paved bike trail and unpaved pathways are of value. The park play area is a valued open space.

Comments on aesthetic and access issues noted that the area serves as a buffer and has a nice view. The public garden is valued. Undeveloped areas and trees are other aesthetic values in this open space. This is a lovely and pristine wooded area in the heart of Anchorage adjacent to Rogers Park and to the Chester Creek Greenbelt, as well as adjacent to local soccer field. This would be a great addition to the Chester Creek greenbelt.

East end of Tikishla Parks and wetlands were identified as adding to the quality of the greenbelt continuity. It is especially important to have linear access and to experience the character of the stream. Also, the stairs are important to access shopping from the residential area (to New Sagaya) and downtown without having to drive a car.

In addition, the views around West Chester Lagoon while traveling south on Minnesota Drive are worth protecting. Also, this area has a spiritual peaceful quality. The view of the moon from the north side of the lagoon is beautiful.

The area provides habitat for moose and lynx. The area by the Chester Creek bridge has spawning Dolly Varden. A fire enhanced the diversity of this important wildlife habitat to include grasslands, wetlands and old growth white spruce. There was concern that waterfowl habitat be protected. Frogs and birds are also found here.

Other comments about the area noted that the artificial maintenance of the water level in Westchester Lagoon West of Romig Hill is killing trees along Chester Creek. Another comment said "Keep it forested and undeveloped." The springs on the east side of the hillside are of value. There is a proposal to move the North Fork of Chester Creek out of the ditch running South Park and into the original streambed, which meanders through this parcel.

Concerns were also raised about monitoring contamination from an old dump. Some of this area is privately held and is approved for development.

**9. Community Garden (within Chester Creek Greenbelt):** Comments include recreation value. This location provides a place for free community gardening.

**10. Lake Otis/DeBarr Parcel:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic and access values. It was expressed that this would be a nice park. It borders airport heights. In addition, there is a path leading from 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue across from McInnes Street that leads to the lake which is home to birds and offers a beautiful view. This is a nice walk.

**11. 13<sup>th</sup> and A/King Parcel:** Comments include recreation and aesthetic values. This area acts as a pocket park for Fairview. Work is being done to remove a shed. There is concern over public drinking and vandalism that may compromise open space values.

**12. Ship Creek Greenbelt and Mouth:** Comments include recreation, access, wildlife habitat and hydrological comments for the Ship Creek area. The trail was identified for its recreational value. This is a good area for fishing, biking and skiing. Access to the coastal trail and the Glenn Highway trail is valued. The proposed bike trail extension on the South side is seen as a great idea. The Ship creek delta is important for Beluga whale and shorebird habitat. Mergansers, otters, beaver, moose and waterfowl use habitat upstream. This is an "...important watershed and we should not turn our back on it." There are tremendous greenbelt opportunities for all types of activities, even canoeing.

There is a superfund site present (old Standard Steel site) and this raises concerns. One comment expressed that ARRC might be open to tourism-friendly development that could incorporate open space on the north side of Ship Creek rather than using the area for RR switching, repair and storage in the Anchorage yard.

**13. Mt. View Park:** Comments include access, recreation and wildlife habitat. It is seen as an important trail link or node providing access to the Glenn Highway trail. Passerines may use the area.

**14. Glenn Highway Trail:** Comments include recreation and access values. The trail is used for biking, walking, rollerblading and skiing. It also provides access to parkland and military lands and Eagle River.

**15. Centennial Campground:** Comments include for recreation values. Area is used for jogging.

**16. Bartlett Ski Trail:** Comments include recreation and wildlife habitat values. Nordic skiing, jogging and birding are activities that occur in this area.

**17. Creekside Park:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic values, and wildlife habitat. The area is used by people walking and provides habitat for moose and birds. It also provides an important buffer zone.

**18. East 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue (East of Muldoon):** Comments include access values. This area connects to the nearby school.

**19. Near Creekside Park:** Comments include recreation value, aesthetic qualities and wildlife habitat values. All comments were general.

**20. Patterson Trail:** Comments include recreation values, aesthetic qualities and access. The paved trail is used as a bike trail and for jogging. It connects to park and elementary school. It provides a route that kids use to avoid traffic. There is concern that it will be developed as a road.

**21. Cheney Lake:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic values, wildlife habitat and environmental education values. Recreation activities include jogging, dog walking and ice-skating. The area provides habitat for waterfowl and passerines.

**22. Section of Chester Creek Greenbelt:** Comments include recreation values. Activities include walking and jogging.

**23. Baxter Bog:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic values, wildlife habitat and for environmental education values in this area. The area is used as a greenbelt for subdivisions. Neighbors love this park. It is used for walking, skiing, jogging, dog walking and birding. The wetlands are wildlife habitat for moose, songbirds and waterfowl. The area was also described as part of a wildlife corridor. Teachers at Baxter school use the area for environmental education. The Patterson Street right of way provides for excellent access to the park.

**24. Muldoon Park:** Comments include recreation and wildlife habitat. The area is used for jogging, hiking, birdwatching and as a pars course. Muldoon Park is used for teaching children about nature as it offers "excellent viewing opportunities." There should be a high priority on protecting the military land as it is used for orienteering, wildlife observation, exercise and is a nice and quiet open space.

**25. Tudor/Muldoon Curve Wetland:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic qualities, access, wildlife habitat, environmental education as well as hydrological values. Comments on recreation values included that this was an important open space for the Muldoon/East Tudor area. The area is used for neighborhood walks in summer and winter. The curve was identified as an elbow that connects Muldoon and Tudor. One comment concluded "...the scene offers many reasons why we live here in Alaska."

Access is also important as this area provides links to existing schools and to and from residential area. There are many paths that lead to the open space from the housing area. Wildlife habitat comments included that "...the moose call this area home," as it offers shelter and food. Moose and waterfowl also frequent the area. The wetland community was indicated as being secondary growth.

**26. Pioneer Drive:** Comments include access. It is indicated that the area is important for providing a link to Far North Bicentennial Park.

**27. East End of East 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue:** Comments include its importance in providing access to Fort Richardson Military Land, wildlife habitat as well as hydrological values. Prior to development of the north side, this was a prime winter moose area as well as prime wetland area. A large variety of birds and plants reside here.

**28. St. Mary's Church:** Comments include aesthetic values. It is located on "good high ground" to provide a view of town.

**29. Fish Creek Headwaters:** Comments include recreation, wildlife habitat, access, aesthetic and hydrological values. The area provides habitat for waterfowl and moose. Commercial neighborhoods and Tudor Road surround the area. It is a filled in wetland area that used to provide habitat for a lot of birds and areas for hiking and recreation. There may be related drainage problems. There is interest in linking the Fish Creek Park and the Woodland Park with the estuary of the creek via the greenbelt trail.

In addition, Fish Creek needs restoration and protection. The headwaters of Fish Creek, near the corner of Lake Otis and Tudor near the University Park was filled in the during the 1980s. It was home to 75 species of birds, moose and various other Alaskan animals. This was a good place to watch birds and a good place to get away after a busy day. "We would like our wetland back and a solution to our annual spring flood. This area also acted as a buffer to our neighborhood from Tudor Road."

**30. David Green Park:** Comments include recreation, wildlife habitat and other values. The area provides recreation opportunities for children and is used for picnics. It is considered a "very special area" for birdwatching. "The Kids Park is great." One comment concluded that people "...love the park."

**31. Lake Otis:** Comments include recreation and wildlife habitat values. The area is used for hiking and boating. It is the only greenbelt/open space in this area. The trail South of the lake from Tudor to Princeton Street is valued. The area provides habitat for moose and birds.

**32. Westmar Circle:** This open space received comments in the other category. The area contains no open spaces and the community would very much like to see protected open space.

**33. Midtown Park:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic, wildlife habitat, educational and access values. It is used for walks by neighboring workers and hotel patrons. It provides a natural buffer in midtown, an area that does not have much park space left. A nearby lot would make a good open space and expansion of Midtown Park. Such an area is important, as there are already many big box stores in Midtown. If this area is not purchased, it will be developed and the last remaining green space in Midtown will be lost. If developed, it should have public facilities and continue access to trails.

**34. Business Park Wetlands:** Comments include wildlife habitat values. The wetland area is said to be nesting area for ducks, geese and gulls.

**35. Northwood Park (and area to the North):** Comments include recreation, aesthetic, access values, wildlife habitat, environmental education and other values. The area is good for recreation, and provides a good noise buffer from traffic along Spenard and International Airport Road. It provides access to bike trails from East of Minnesota to the north and west and to Lake Hood and Spenard and is important access along Fish Creek. The area is also important for habitat. "The 11.3 acre area north of the park should be added to Northwood Park." The wetlands are said to be privately owned, but not developable because they are wetlands. Historically there was a trailer court that was removed 15 years ago. If the private land could be acquired, Northwood Park could be expanded. The area adjoins Fish Creek. Another comment indicated that the vacant lot "gets trashed." The area north of the park could

buffer the wetland and interconnect the parklands. This area is an excellent duck viewing area, especially for children and is frequented by moose.

**36. Fish Creek Greenbelt:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic values, access, wildlife habitat, environmental education, hydrological and other values. Areas used for recreation include the bike trail along Fish Creek between Spenard Road and Northern Lights that "provides a treasure in the middle of Spenard." It's "part of what makes Spenard wonderful." It is an excellent connector to the Coastal Trail. It is a nicely secluded and peaceful area. The floodplain and habitat provide aesthetic values. It is considered important to have linear access along the corridor and to be able to experience the character of the corridor. Wildlife include squirrels, moose, ducks and eagles. The area is also valued for its use for teaching kids about ecosystems and that they feel safe because there are enough people. Education values are higher here because the area contains an open stream, rather than a culverted stream. Interpretation is important here as well.

Other comments are concerned with protecting the floodplain and water quality. The area extends to #22 (section of the Chester Creek Greenbelt). A part of this identified open space includes a small parcel that adjoins Fish Creek and may presently be for sale. Comments suggest that this area should be part of the Fish Creek Greenbelt and that presently there is a hotel and Wendy's being built there. Another comment stated "Fish Creek should not be encroached upon any more," and that "...the parcel subdivision for sale right by the creek encroaches on the creek too much."

**37. Wisconsin Street Bike Trail:** Comments include access values. The bike trail is considered excellent and provides access from Spenard to the Coastal trail.

**38. Balto Seppala Park:** Comments include recreation and wildlife habitat values.

**39. Jones Lake Access:** Comments regard access. The area is valued as it provides access to Jones Lake and open space in a high-density neighborhood. The 7 acres area is said to be currently under construction and slated for subdivision into three lots. There may be an opportunity to protect some of this open space.

**40. Turnagain Bog:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic qualities, wildlife habitat, environmental education, access and other values. Recreation comments note that it has a good trail. The bog is valued for aesthetic reasons and it was noted that people drive by slowly to watch for rabbits, moose and look at wildflowers and plants. Other aesthetic comments include that it "...feels like you aren't in the city and that you can see the water movement." The area provides a buffer between the airport and surrounding neighborhoods. It has a great aesthetic value for it "feels like Alaska". It makes a nice buffer between incompatible uses – the airport and the residential setting. It provides habitat for moose, including big bull moose. Birds, such as hawks, and flora are also in the area. The area used to support a lot of hawks. Environmental education here is important as the area has flarks and strangs, is a good place for photography and a good area for field trips. Another comment notes that the area is highly threatened now as it is a proposed snow dump and may be subject to industrial expansion.

**41. Coastal Trail Corridor and Associated Parks and Open Space:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic qualities, general comments on access, wildlife habitat, environmental education and other values. Recreation values included were that the area is used for skiing, rollerblading, bike riding, dog

walking, hiking, viewing fall color changes and birdwatching. Aesthetic quality comments note that the noise is bad for neighborhoods. The area provides views and allows tourists to see a great part of Anchorage. It also provides areas to watch sunsets, see the mountains and the northern lights. Comments regarding wildlife habitat included that the area provides habitat for moose, shorebirds, waterfowl, eagle nesting areas and cranes. One comment indicates that the waterfowl habitat should be enhanced. Environmental education and teaching children about animals, nature, and the earthquake are important uses. This area is an excellent corridor for the west Anchorage Coastal Trail link between south Anchorage and north Anchorage. This area needs to include a distinct and broad buffer of natural area along trail.

Other comments for the area note that the Heritage Land Bank (HLB) land is not designated parkland and thus, currently not protected. This land is reported to be jointly owned by the Alaska DOT, AWWU and HLB and is not protected space. The airport wants to acquire this land for cargo development and this is a concern. People would like to see it remain open space.

Referring to Earthquake Park, comments express sentiments including "...the city should not have allowed additional development after the earthquake" and "no more building." The continuity of the greenway is valued as well as the length of the greenway. This area is spiritually renewing. In addition, the mudflats are part of the viewshed from most downtown office buildings, restaurants and hotels. The jet fuel pipeline now installed there has left a scar. "This trail is one of Anchorage's greatest assets. I'd like to see a south coastal trail extension. The Coastal Trails should be expanded because they are the best access to the woods."

**42. Shore of Lake Spenard:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic values, access and wildlife habitat. The area is used for walking, jogging rollerblading, and biking around the lake. Aesthetic values include views of the mountains and of floatplanes as well as bird watching areas for tourists. Spenard Lake beach access is of concern as this is the only public access left in the midst of sea planes. The area behind DOT raises access issues. Comment suggest that this area should be improved and that there should be regular access hours.

**43. North Airport Triangle Wetland:** Comments include aesthetic values, wildlife habitat and one other comment. The area should be maintained as open space as there is a viewpoint to the north. It also provides an important buffer area between the coast and the airport. This is important eagle habitat and moose and bear use the area. The south half of the parcel contains high ground and is currently being excavated; the north half has cottonwoods at a lower elevation.

**44. 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue Teimoves Spring:** Comments include wildlife habitat values. The spring in winter provides bird habitat in winter for robins, bohemian waxwings and other birds. Fox, snowshoe hare and moose also use the area.

**45. Captain Cook Park and Resolution Park:** Comments include aesthetic values and other issues. The area is considered an important area for its viewsheds and for tourism.

**46. Government Hill Greenbelt:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic issues, access, and wildlife habitat. Trails are valued for their recreation potential. Aesthetic values include a de facto community garden, views of birds, specifically merlin, from nearby military lands and great views of the Port area, downtown Anchorage and Denali Mountain. This area provides access to Cherry Hill Creek, which is

located on military land. Wildlife in the area include two pair of fox and an eagle in the winter. At least part of the area is owned by the Railroad and leased to the Municipality (99-year lease). Parts of the area may need to be cleaned up. Walking through the area is very pleasant.

**47. Far North Bicentennial Park and Adjacent Areas:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic qualities, access, wildlife habitat, environmental education and other values. Recreation in this natural open space is important. One comment indicates a desire to see the Tour of Anchorage paved for bikes. Activities such as cross country skiing, orienteering, birdwatching, horseback riding, running, walking, dog mushing, hiking and biking are all valued in the area. There are great quiet areas to bike especially the Hilltop area through Far North Bicentennial Park. Spencer Loop is extensively used and special. These ski trails have good air quality compared to Kincaid with the jet fuel fumes. The area is used for walking and running on Campbell Airstrip area trails. There is a desire for more non-motorized trails as set forth in the Anchorage Trails Plan. There is a lot of walking on the Spencer Trail, Gasline Trail and the ski area in the summer. The Gasline Trail is fun for sledding and skiing. People walk dogs in a section of the Park near Service and down trails on the BLM trails. The western part of the park is also used. The area next to Hilltop is especially valued due to its diverse topography for orienteering, its beauty and its relative quietness. The Park is considered a safe area for single people to recreate. There are skijoring trails here that are of value. Birding and wildlife viewing are also activities valued in this park. This is a prime area for the Mayor's Marathon, which draws people from all over the US for competition.

Other comments regarding recreation suggest that the recreation experience is degraded from overuse. One comment suggests extending and connecting the Campbell Creek Trail with the Bragaw Bridge. Another suggests an extension of the multi-use trail south along the western edge of the Campbell Tract to Hillside. There is support for keeping trails narrow.

Aesthetic values in the park were also diverse. Comments favor keeping the park a wild place and providing adequate buffers to the park. Views and forests provide aesthetic qualities. Simply "knowing it's (the park's) there" was expressed as a value of this open space. This park is important as continuous adjacent parkland and there is a nice view of the trees at the corner of Abbott and Hilltop, it buffers the park. Campbell Creek Gorge is considered very special.

Access to and from Chugach State Park and adjacent neighborhoods is important as is access to or from the Gasline Trail. The trails are close to town and very easy to access. The Tank Trail is heavily used and provides illegal access to Ft. Richardson. The class A wetlands are unique and a "jewel of Anchorage," and they are important for future generations. The park provides access for skiers, hikers and mushers.

The park provides habitat for many species of wildlife. Noted were swans, bear (possible dens, especially in S. Fork Canyon) lynx, wolf sign, coyotes, moose, owls, lots of birds, goshawks, shrike, migratory birds, thrushes, warblers, bald eagles, squirrels, rabbits, fish and woodpeckers. Valuable wetlands and diverse habitat types are present including muskeg, forest and alpine. This is important for moose and there are many moose trails and calving occurs in the area.

Environmental education is highly valued in the area for both children and adults. Scouts use the area near the Campbell creek Science Center (CCSC). The CCSC is highly valued for environmental education. If habitat is interrupted around Campbell Tract, outdoor education would be negatively impacted. Because the area is close to neighborhoods, it makes it feasible to teach children in this area about environmental education.

There are other diverse comments. Other comments include the area's historical value as WWII site. Comments express interest in protecting the area as a wild space. One comment suggested that specific places be identified as critical and not to be touched, especially areas on the south side of the park. There is a need for an updated (last plan dates from 1985) plan for the entire park and classification as a natural wilderness. A proposed ball field threatens the area. And the encroachment of development is already taking a toll. The riparian corridor needs special protection, one comment suggested. The creek crossings and water project also needs a closer look. There is concern regarding development along the Tudor side of the park. One person stated "don't chip any more of the park away."

Bragaw and Dowling extensions would cut this area – could easily damage the creeks, drainage and wetlands. "Do not want it to be bisected with a new road!" Impacts like riding on trails too early and tree cutting, etc. are degrading the area and the lack of enforcement is a problem. The Campbell Tract is more or less pristine now. Another comment stated "maintain all the forested areas within the park." There is concern that upon the expiration of the BLM lease, that the Municipality would take title to the park. "The downhill ski area development threatens the area."

"There should be a plan for this area so that we all know what is protected and what is developable."

**48. Campbell Creek Greenbelt:** This area includes adjacent parks and received comments concerning recreation, aesthetic values, access, wildlife habitat, environmental education and hydrological values. Recreation in the greenbelt includes transportation, paddling, access to ballfields, canoeing, fishing, use of trails, great picnic area, biking, walking and running. The open recreation area is valued and has excellent fish, frog, riparian and critical habitat. Aesthetic values indicate that the area serves as a great buffer. It is beautiful and provided a buffer from developed areas surrounding it.

Access issues include that the greenbelt is considered important to maintain as an access corridor from the west to the east side of the New Seward Highway. The area needs an underpass for the Highway to connect the greenbelt on either side of the Highway. Wildlife habitat includes salmon and beaver. This area is a habitat for a very fragile fish population already stressed by over-fishing and pollution. The wetlands are valued. Classes use the area for environmental education.

Other issues include the suggestion that the greenbelt be extended further east. Comments indicate too much access will hurt the area. One comment concluded that there has been "...increased traffic on Arctic Blvd and in the neighborhood, increased trash, destruction of the shoreline and fish habitat along creek." There are "...no amenities for trash or bathrooms and there is loud music and lights." A suggestion was to limit fishing to kids under 16 years of age.

One comment indicates there is already sufficient access via Taku Lake and farther west on Dimond. "Why not use the vacant lot at the corner of Dimond and C Street" as it is a "...perfect access point." Jewel Lake is cited as an example of a place being loved to death with negative impacts and the destruction of the bank and fish habitat from people.

There is concern that this area might be a right of way. Residents in the area use it for access to the Abbott Loop Trail and it makes a nice extension all the way to Alaska Pacific University.

This is the first access for the Arctic/Dimond/Taku Inlet/Campbell neighborhoods for outdoor activities. It is important to the neighborhood for walks and wildlife viewing. This area is threatened by a proposed parking lot at Archer Road. "The city of Anchorage should approach owners of abandoned and dilapidated buildings before developing the greenbelt as parking lots." Runoff from

developed areas is already threatening the area. One participant said that this park enhances the quality of life of the neighborhood, but that newer development in the area is inconsistent.

**49. North-South Trail Corridor:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic and access values. The north south trail is separate from busy streets and serves as a connection to the Midtown Park open space. Views of the mountains should be maintained.

**50. Middle Campbell Creek Greenbelt:** Comments include recreation, access, wildlife habitat, aesthetic values and hydrological values. The river corridor connecting Polaris wetland to Far North Bicentennial Park is not of high value and restoration is needed for impacted sections of the stream. It has aesthetic potential. It was noted that a new greenbelt should be established on the middle fork of Campbell Creek from Spruce to Lake Otis Road. The Abbott Loop Community Council supports this project. Such a greenbelt should include Municipality property known as Back Lake (Old Gravel Pit) which is fed by the eastern portion of the Middle Fork of Campbell Creek.

There is significant habitat including a highly active area with moose calves, bears, geese, dolly varden and silvers, and birds of prey such as hawks, red-polls and sparrows. Neighbors view different wildlife and there are good areas for children to play. In addition, the mature trees buffer between the creek and the residences and contributes to the charm of the neighborhood while sustaining property values.

**51. 68<sup>th</sup> and Lake Otis Area:** Comments include a need for open space. The area badly needs a community park as there are too many kids playing in the street. There is a buffer from the Seward Highway that has recreation potential and many birds.

**52. Dowling/Lake Otis Forested Area:** Comments include recreation and aesthetic values. This area is described as a nice forested area which could be a little recreation area as there is no play area for kids nearby. The area has value as a good noise buffer. "Greenspace along Dowling could be nice."

**53. Railroad Corridor:** Comments include recreation, access and wildlife habitat values. The railroad corridor connects habitat and is used for recreation.

**54. Wetland next to Railroad:** Comments include wildlife habitat and other comments. Because water is dammed by the Railroad, this area becomes a good natural treatment area to enhance water quality. There is only one culvert.

**55. Inlet Railroad Bluff:** Comments include recreation, wildlife habitat and access values. The area provides a place for a "delightful walk." There are opportunities for birdwatching and wildlife viewing. The area provides all season access and public access above the refuge. Purchase of this land is recommended to retain its recreation and public access values.

**56. O'Malley/RR Corner Lot:** Comments include recreation values. It is suggested that the area be restored for recreational park use. Kids use it for biking and skateboarding – it has a great "contour".

**57. Bluff Neighborhood Tennis Courts:** Comments include recreation values. The tennis courts are the only places in the area for recreation.

**58. O'Malley Median Strip:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic qualities and wildlife habitat values. The pond is used for hockey in winter. The area provides wildlife habitat for moose, geese and ducks. There have been many sightings of coyote chasing geese. Many people harvest wild greens from this area.

**59. Klatt Bog Northeast:** Comments include wildlife habitat and aesthetic values. It provides habitat for lynx, bears, wolverine, coyote and moose.

**60. Klatt Bog Southwest:** Comments include aesthetic values, wildlife habitat, environmental education and more general comments. One comment pointed out the fact that there is no easy access to this wetland as it is surrounded by private land. This wetland is valued for its water quality enhancement function and bird habitat.

**61. Southport Drive Woods:** Comments include aesthetic qualities, wildlife habitat, recreation, education values. The area is seen as a good place to protect especially as Klatt Bog has been diminished in size. There is aesthetic value because of the spruce forest and wetlands near residential areas. Participants would like private property owners to sell this land to the municipality or otherwise protect it. This area is a wildlife corridor for moose, lynx, and black bear and nesting and migratory waterfowl area for grebes and yellowlegs. It is also a place to run and hike and has a scenic promontory overlooking the coast and the mountains.

**62. Kaiser Property/Coastal Trail at Campbell Lake:** Comments include aesthetic qualities, access, recreation, and wildlife habitat values. The view of Campbell Lake, the coast, and the mouth of the creek are especially valued. This is a valuable coastal ecosystem. Quality upland spruce and birch habitat exists here. Participants note that moose, bear sign, woodpeckers, eagles and other birds inhabit the area. The area helps to preserve a link for wildlife migration and open space along the coastline. A section of three blocks (1/4 section) is probably private land.

**63. South Coastal Area:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic qualities, access, wildlife habitat and environmental education values. Many comments were specifically about the possible extension of the coastal trail.

Comments on recreation indicate that the area is valued as an area to view birds, wildlife observation, hunting, mucking about and it is great for kids. Hunters seek continued access to this area. It is also a great picnic spot. Wildlife habitat is provided for migratory birds, waterfowl, shorebirds (nesting and resting) cranes, field mice and snow geese. Moose are found near the forest edge. Beluga whales also feed in the Campbell Creek estuary. Swallows nest in the cliffs. The sandy beach at Point Campbell is very unusual, as it is sand and not mud. There is a lot of driftwood that catches here and public access to this beach is desired. This is an intact salt marsh ecosystem and is important to protect as an undeveloped area (not appropriate for a trail). Building on the coast disturbs drainage. This is an important feeding area for raptors such as owls and marsh hawks. The Coastal Zone Management considers the whole area to be preservation wetlands. The area is used for environmental education and is unique due to the "ghost forest" of dead trees from the 1964 earthquake. Participants seek a limit on motorized access.

Comments regarding the coastal trail indicate that some prefer the trail to be built on the flats and used for low impact recreation as it provides a critical link to the south. It would complement trails inland. Other comments indicate that if placed at the base of the bluff the trail would have less impact and be a true coastal trail. A natural trail for bikes is preferred over a roadside trail. Another comment was against siting the coastal trail here as the south end is a hunting area.

**64. Birch Lake Trail:** Comments regard access, recreation and aesthetic values. The area was described as a little trail between yards and forested areas. Some children play in this area. A good buffer between school and the residential area.

**65. Birch Lake:** Comments include recreation, access and wildlife habitat. The area now receives light recreational use. Increased use may deteriorate the habitat values. There has been talk of taking out trees to provide public access, but at least one participant notes that this action could scare off loons. There is no "traffic" now as there is no obvious public access except a utility easement. The area provides good habitat for loons and waterfowl. There are, however, houses around the lake with backyards edge up against its edge.

**66. Sand/Sundi/Jewel Lakes Area:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic qualities, wildlife habitat, environmental education values and other comments. Recreation values in the area include walking and rowing. Area is aesthetically beautiful and provides open space and a noise buffer for the neighborhood; views are terrific.

The area is considered class "A" wetlands and provides nesting areas for birds and habitat for moose and waterfowl. The area is used for education by nearby schools. The wetland acts as a "sponge" and has other hydrological values including controlling high water levels and connects, "cleans" or filters the three lakes. Comments suggested an undeveloped park on the lake. Another comment indicated that the area was inaccessible for a while and it is nice to be able to walk through it again.

**67. Gladys Wood Park and Adjacent Area:** Comments include recreation values. There is a trail through the area (a bike path on the east edge) and the area provides a quiet open space for the neighborhood. Adults use the path for walking while kids play in the woods where there are large trees.

**68. Raspberry/Jewel Neighborhood Open Space:** Comments include recreation, access and wildlife habitat values. This area is thought to be private land and there is a trail across it from residential land. All other lots in the surrounding area have been developed. There is a need for open space in this area. Birds use the area for habitat.

**69. Connor's/ Strawberry Bog:** Comments include recreation values, aesthetic qualities, wildlife habitat, environmental education, access and other comments.

Skiing, running, and ski-joring are all valued in this area. The area is valued as it is accessible from neighborhoods. There is a raised trail that is used, a trail to the lake and one can roam far off-trail for skiing. Excellent dog walking area. Goose egg collecting is also done in the area.

The bog provides a visual buffer including a good view from the road and residential areas. The stretch along Minnesota is considered a "nice introduction to Alaska." There is a feeling of openness here.

The area provides wildlife habitat for waterfowl including nesting loons, coyotes, eagles that perch and feed in the winter, great-horned owls, hawks and moose that feed here in the winter. Pacific loon and geese also use the area for nesting. Wetland flarks and strangs are valued as wildlife habitat.

Beautiful stands of birch and cottonwood are in this area.

There are substantial environmental education opportunities here relating to wetland ecology and topology (flarks and strangs).

There is concern about the private land in the south area with comments suggesting this area should be added to the protected area. They are part of a corridor and provide hydrological values. The area also is valued as it provides noise abatement from the airport. Another concern is the "allowing of 'grandfathered' junkyards." The MAPCO site at Raspberry Road is also a concern. Connor's bog is seen as an "island in a sea of development and is needed for "...quality of life." Participants note that airport expansion should not be permitted to impact this area.

**70. Delong Lake Area:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic qualities, access, wildlife habitat and other comments. Recreation activities include canoeing, fishing from the dock, hiking, cross-country skiing and ice-skating. The beach on the lake is also considered a great place for kids.

The wetland provides a visual buffer from development along Delong Lake. It also provides open space for several subdivisions. One comment referenced the Meadow Lake Airport open space: "...this land is fenced and has no public access, but it has very important aesthetic value and wildlife habitat value." Referring to the same area one comment noted that "the property connects to Delong Lake Park and gives the park a much larger feeling. It also provides the Alderwood subdivision with aesthetic value."

The area provides habitat for Pacific loons and has a buffer to the nesting site from people. Breeding birds in the area include great-horned owls in the woods, widgeons, mallards, tree and violet-green swallows, common snipe, yellowlegs, dowitchers and Canada Geese. Birds staging in the area include red-necked grebes and sandhill cranes. Marsh hawks, moose, bald eagles and blackfish are often sighted in the area. Plants in the area include leatherleaf, labrador tea, bog rosemary and wild calla.

There is concern about the wetlands surrounding the lake. Comments suggest that they need protection from development and damage from people walking on fragile habitat. "The northwest side of Delong Lake has been impacted by development in only one area, while the southeast side of the lake has been highly developed. The northwest side gives the lake a natural component." Another comment expressed desire to keep the open space between Delong Lake and the airport.

**71. Spenard Heights:** Comments include wildlife habitat values. The pond in Spenard heights used to be an artesian spring that fed Delong Lake, now it dries up in the fall. The wetland is privately owned. There is a community well here. A wetland was filled to build a duplex. This forced ducks to stop nesting there. Some waterfowl still come in all summer until the water goes away. There is concern that if city water is extended that the vacant lots will be developed and this green space will be lost. Moose use this land because of a paucity of other habitat nearby. There are eagles, lynx, black bear and rabbits in this valuable neighborhood open space.

**72. Airport Noise Barrier:** Comments include aesthetic values. The area provides a noise buffer for the National Guard and Airport.

**73. Sand Lake Gravel Pit and Jade Park:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic qualities, access, wildlife habitat and environmental education values. Comments regarding recreation suggest that the area should be reclaimed for future recreation use. There may be dumping taking place here. Four wheelers and dirt bikes have damaged the vegetation; the area becomes dusty during dry periods. Gravel extraction has not been legally banned and the owners periodically try to mine the area. There is a need for a plan for these areas. The area could be a formal park and recreation area and could be an expansion from Jade Park.

Other comments indicate the place is a good place to go and "rip around and not bother anybody." Jade Park and the gravel pit are noted as one of the few places where people in that part of town recreate in a natural setting. Running, dog walking and skiing are all popular activities here. The area provides habitat for nesting and migrating shorebirds as well as moose. The area is used as an educational site for teaching kids about plant succession. The natural vegetation and setting at the gravel pit is a nice complement to Jade Park, which is developed with ballfields and a playground. There are few other parks in this area.

**74. John's Park and Adjacent Area:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic values, access, wildlife habitat and hydrological values. The existing trail in the park provides a place for cross-country skiing and biking. The open area is undeveloped and provides view of the inlet and mountains while developed area is small and also provides aesthetic qualities. The area provides access to the bluff and there are a lot of trails. The area provides habitat to moose, owls, and the mudflats have wolves, coyotes, an active eagle nest, bears, sandhill cranes and waterfowl. "There is very little designated parkland in south Anchorage and it would be great to have some more."

**75. Kincaid Park:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic qualities, access, and wildlife habitat values. Recreationists use the area for skiing, walking, running, biking, birding, moose, coyote, lynx watching, airplane watching, hiking, orienteering, picnicking and other quiet recreation. It is an essential as a place close to downtown. This is a place to go and feel like you are out of the city and in the woods. It provides opportunities to relax and for outdoor activities. Views of the water and sand dunes provide a unique and lovely setting. Views of Mt. Susitna from the chalet are valued as well.

The area provides access to the coast and trails especially the coastal trail and is an excellent neighborhood park. Moose, lynx, brown bears, black bears, fish, eagles, flora and other birds are found in the area. Other comments indicate that the area is "developed enough already, " and that it needs protection from the airport intrusion near Little Campbell Lake area. There is a desire to build narrow trails. One comment suggested that the area should remain a low impact area versus an area for organized sporting recreation area. This is a unique Anchorage amenity with views from the Hillside foothills to the coast. It also provides a nice view from the air. There is concern that the expansion of the airport and additional development is irresponsible. More protection is needed to protect the habitat.

**76. South Anchorage Schoolyard Open Space:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic qualities and wildlife habitat values. This area is right next to the schoolyard and provides the only remaining place for kids' forts as well as moose in the area. The area is also good for holding water and protects nearby homes from flooding.

**77. Open Space North of Furrow Creek:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic qualities, wildlife habitat and other values. The area holds water. So many trees have been cut that it becomes very windy. Recommendations include saving some of this as habitat and provide a windbreak.

**78. Bluff Overlook South of Furrow Creek:** Comments regard recreation and aesthetic qualities. The area provides a great destination for an evening walk and has beautiful views. This lot would make a great pocket park.

**79. Campbell Creek Floodplain:** Comments include hydrological values. The parcel may be developed. Ice jams and floods occur naturally here and therefore a buffer area should be left undeveloped. This is the last natural stretch of the creek.

**80. Abbott Road Fred Meyer:** Comments include recreation and access values.

**81. Ruth Arcand Park:** Comments include recreation, wildlife habitat, aesthetic, access, environmental education and other values. Trails in the park are used for skiing, equestrian use, walking, dog-mushing, dog walking and hiking. Good viewing of moose and coyote. The golf course is also used. Neighbors want to be able to use the golf course in the winter. The area has 3 1/2 to 4 miles of trails. One comment suggested more equestrian trails. The area provides habitat for moose, geese and bears. There are schools nearby which could use it for environmental education.

**82. Ruth Arcand/Service High School Connector:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic qualities, access, wildlife habitat and other values. Recreation activities include dog walking and equestrian use, with the hope that equestrian trails could be continued from Section 16 to this area. Aesthetic qualities include a nice view of this land from the Highway and the importance of keeping open space in an area where development is occurring all around. The area provides access as a connective corridor from Service High School southwest to Huffman Business Park and is a proposed trail route. Children use it to connect to schools. The area also provides access to Section 16 (Ruth Arcand Park) and has good access both north and south.

The area provides wildlife habitat to black and brown bears, moose, coyote, snowshoe hare, spruce hens, owls and eagles. It is believed that all of the associated parcels are designated as wetlands and that they are part of a wildlife corridor. The area is also the headwaters of a fork of Little Campbell Creek and the surrounding area provides watershed functions.

There are plans to develop 3.5 residences per acre and comments suggest that it would be better to develop less densely. One parcel may be for sale by an "old time Alaskan." Putting Bragaw through this area would cut off connectivity between the area and Section 16.

**83. Abbott Loop Road-Ruth Arcand Connector:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic values and access. This area is a greenbelt along the road and provides linkage to other trails, including to the Bicentennial Park, which has heavy use. It is a multi-purpose trail with vegetation and is separated from the road. It is enjoyed by hikers, bikers, horseback riders and snowshoers. The setting along Abbott Loop Road has a nice view.

**84. Birch Road Forest Land and Park:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic qualities, access and wildlife habitat. The area is a neighborhood park, yet does not feel like a city park, and is used as an

equestrian arena as well as an exercise trail for neighborhood walkers. The area is pretty and has not yet been subdivided. The forestland provides access to many trails and to O'Malley. It is a nice break from all the development. Moose have been known to calve here and the area provides habitat to bear as well. The area is privately owned.

**85. Birch/Huffman Curve Forest:** Comments include recreation, access, wildlife habitat, aesthetic values and another comment regarding hydrological values. The area is used for dog-walking and snowshoeing. It provides access between neighborhoods through trails. The area is also a large undeveloped habitat of upland spruce forest. This area may be owned by the school district. It is an area which has good drainage with lots of spruce and is thickly wooded. The neighborhood uses it. It is also a travel corridor for wildlife. It's a nice natural park.

**86. Birch/Huffman Equestrian Trail:** Comments include recreation values. The area is a greenbelt along a road and is used by equestrians.

**87. Rabbit Creek Greenbelt:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic qualities, environmental education, access, wildlife habitat and other comments. The area serves as a recreation corridor and activities include hiking, skiing and mountain biking. Aesthetic values include a "very secluded feeling because the creek has high bluffs," and a view down the valley. The area provides access to Chugach State Park, and could connect to a Potter Marsh Nature Center and south Coastal Trail. One comment indicates a desire to be able to walk the entire creek. Another comment suggested preserving the easement for public access along Rabbit Creek upstream of 145th and Buffalo Street Bridge to Rabbit Creek Road.

The area is also seen as a wildlife migration corridor for bear, moose, lynx, fox and coyotes, and as a primary Potter Marsh tributary. Hawks and eagles patrol this area. The greenbelt along the creek aids in water quality for the creek and marsh. There is a feeling that more greenbelt should be acquired. The area is also seen as only "marginally build-able" and that it should remain open space for the values and services it provides. All-terrain vehicle (ATV) use in the area needs management, as there is current use there. "Most lots are large and houses are set back so there is still a continuous greenbelt."

This area has an existing Comprehensive Plan and easements where lots are platted. There needs to be concentration on the upper portion of the greenbelt, east of Buffalo Road. The city of Anchorage has been acquiring some land to the west or downstream. The housing development is pushing down to the creek. There is a need to discourage building in this area. Some of the upper greenbelt is in the 50 year floodplain as well. The area provides a hydrologic buffer. One comment notes that access is important. The present 25 foot easement is not adequate for access, even for the landowners along the creek.

**88. Section 36/Hillside:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic qualities, access, wildlife habitat and other values. The trails are used for Nordic skiing, skijoring, and general recreation. The existing trail system could be improved to make a good trail park. A trail could lead from Stork Park into the area as this is an easy grade and then it could drop into Rabbit Creek.

Aesthetically, the area is valued for the transition from wetlands to spruce forest, including western hemlock, cranberry bogs, blueberries. This area has unique birds and plants. The area is

considered important for both the region and the neighborhood for recreation and access value and as a valuable wildlife corridor from north to south from Rabbit Creek to Little Rabbit Creek watersheds.

Male moose congregate in the north parcel during rutting season. Cows congregate in the south parcel. Current access to Chugach State Park is also valued. The area supports habitat for unique plant communities, birds and mammals. Moose use the area for breeding and calving. Waterfowl nest here including loons. There are bear and mink in the area. Western (Mountain?) Hemlock supports upland birds. The area is steep, wet and has poor percolation and it should not be developed.

**89. Little Rabbit Creek:** Comments include recreation, access, wildlife habitat, environmental education and other values. It is considered important to establish public access. The area is considered a necessary and major wildlife corridor and continues from Potter to Chugach State Park. The area includes wetlands and provides habitat for waterfowl, owls and other birds as well as moose, bear and lynx. It is considered a major game trail.

The greenbelt should be protected as one unit above Goldenview Drive and in the developed area below. The animals move above the canyon to the south, which is part of the Goldenview homeowner association. The creek below Goldenview Drive is a rugged area, covered with devil's club and alders, which provides for wildlife habitat.

The wetlands provide floodwater storage and flood control. It would be nice to have trail access from along the creek to Bear Valley School and Stork Park. This area could also be used for education. A homestead has a small botanical garden of plants collected over 50 years. This area could be a park or interpretive area. The area provides a hydrologic buffer. The present 25-foot easement is not adequate for access, even for the landowners along the creek.

**90. Wetland 80 and Adjacent Areas:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic qualities, wildlife habitat, access, environmental education and other values. The neighborhood uses the area as an informal recreation area especially in the winter. It is an important open space. Activities include skiing, walking and birdwatching. The trail also provides access to Rabbit Creek Greenbelt.

Aesthetic qualities include expansive scenic mountain views. Wildlife habitat comments indicate that the area is seen as a corridor that goes from east to west as well as from north to south. The area provides habitat for moose calving, wolf, brown and black bears, lynx and nesting shorebirds. The area is a potential environmental education area for Rabbit Creek School as the school already has playing fields. Hydrology in the area is important and it is described as having an open pond, high water table and open meadows. This area should be acquired.

**91. Nyman Airstrip/Alpine:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic qualities and other values. This connective corridor has vistas to Chugach State Park. The area also has other unique views and geologic features. Public access is needed to alpine areas.

**92. Potter's Marsh:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic qualities, education and wildlife habitat values. The area provides a place for ice-skating, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, and birdwatching. The view of the marsh is very nice from the Highway. The area provides habitat for mammals in the winter particularly moose, coyotes, ermine and shorebirds. This is an important environmental education center and research area, especially with a nature center. This is also an aesthetic feature for tourists. More boardwalks should be added. This area has a beautiful view, and is a great place to create art.

**93. Potter Valley South:** Comments include wildlife habitat, recreation, aesthetic qualities, access and other values. The area provides habitat for lynx and for black bears headed south of the area. Moose calving near the border of Chugach State Park suggest only low-density development should be permitted and open space should be retained with a wildlife corridor.

Songbirds use the area for migration and 27 species have been recorded from a house nearby. The wildlife corridor is being cut off by subdivision development. Approximately 300 acres are slated for development, which causes concern that residences will encroach upon existing parkland. The impact needs to be assessed and evaluated prior to development. Chugach State Park access from the area needs to be included. The area also provides watershed function by acting as a drainage area for Potter Creek. Good tree diversity in the area, including birch, Sitka spruce.

A community park is needed as there is no place in this neighborhood for kids to play. There is a need for interspersed open space in any new development. There are steep slopes at the south end of this open area that should not be developed. The Anchorage Bicycle Club cycles on the road and prefers additional road connections through the area. Private land is used often by neighborhood hikers. This is a very scenic area as you leave Anchorage.

**94. Potter Creek Greenbelt:** Comments include recreation, wildlife habitat, aesthetic values, access, environmental education, and other values. The area provides a place for winter recreation, is seen as a wildlife corridor and provides watershed functions, as it is associated with Potter Marsh and its water quality. This is a pristine canyon. It has some fish and wildlife corridor values. The area provides a hydrologic buffer. One comment is that access is important. The present 25-foot easement is not adequate for access, even for the landowners along the creek.

**95. Lower Huffman/Lake Otis Area Possible Parks:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic, and other values. Recreation includes some horseback riding. This area consists of nine potential neighborhood parks in an area that is said to be under rapid development pressure. These lots are generally vacant and could be developed as neighborhood parks. Most are in private ownership. This "area is under rapid development pressure" and "there is an immediate need for neighborhood parks in this area." "Every year another tract falls into residential development," and "time is of the essence."

**96. Area West Side of Elmore near Huffman:** Comments note recreation and access values.

**97. Proposed School Site at Dearmoun and Elmore Street:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic qualities, access, wildlife habitat and other values. The area is used for horseback riding, biking, walking, dog walking and there are snowmachine trails. The area is well used by the neighborhood. There is an 80-foot access buffer that needs to be maintained. Moose, bear, coyote tracks and woodpeckers and songbirds have all been seen in the area. This is the only open space in this area. It is designated for school use and there are concerns about increased traffic congestion and loss of good open space. A trade for Minnesota/C Street city property for school is suggested. Area could be a neighborhood park. It has nice access to Rabbit Creek.

**98. Seward Highway/Dearmoun Path/Trail:** Comments include recreation values. The area provides a place to walk in the neighborhood off the street and in the forest. The trail is behind houses

and is used for walking and jogging into the Bartlett Ski Trail (#16). The trail is a combination of black top (bike trail) with beaten path between rows of houses.

**99. Little Gold Creek Wetlands:** Comments include recreation, wildlife habitat, and a comment regarding hydrologic values. Recreation activities include wildlife viewing from the road and places for kids to explore. Moose, magpies, nesting stellar jays, bears and lynx all use the area for habitat and it is thought to be part of a corridor. There is a natural drainage southwest out of the wetland through class A and B wetlands.

**100. Birch Road Wetlands/Forest:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic qualities, wildlife habitat and education values. Walking and birdwatching occur in the area. The natural area provides a buffer to homes and Birch Road. Moose, black and brown bear and perching eagles use the area as habitat. The area is also used for nature and outdoor education for kids.

**101. South Fork Little Campbell Creek Greenbelt:** Comments include recreation, aesthetics, wildlife habitat values and a general comment regarding contribution of land. The area is home to lynx and bear and is the only undeveloped space in this area. The area also provides watershed values. One participant might be willing to dedicate his contiguous lot if land is saved.

**102. Tudor Elementary School Area:** Comments concern access. There is one small community path between Tudor Hills Court and Little Tree and there is a need for more paths between residential streets, the greenbelt and the school. This is a neighborhood access issue.

**103. Abbott/Hillside Parcel:** Comments include wildlife habitat values. Moose calve in the area.

**104. South Anchorage/Seward Highway Tree Buffers:** Comments concern aesthetic values. "Natural woods along the Seward Highway in south Anchorage area are a pleasant buffer for the neighborhoods and drivers on the highway." This area "...makes entry into town from the south seem less congested than areas where trees have been cleared." It is "short-sighted and ugly to clear all vegetation buffers between the Highway and residential neighborhoods." "Who would want to live there?"

**105. Potter Creek North:** Comments include aesthetic qualities, wildlife habitat, recreation, education and other comments, including hydrologic values. The area provides nice views to the Inlet and Potter Marsh and has southern and western exposure. Views of exposed andesite and flower displays are also valued. The area joins with Potter marsh and is seen as part of a wildlife corridor. Moose calve and browse the area for food. Black bears and lynx have been seen here as well as wolves and raptors such as bald eagles.

Other values in the area are the hydrology including the low water table and surface drainage to Potter Marsh. The mouth of Survival Creek is important as it provides three-fourths of the water to Potter's Marsh. This whole watershed needs to be surveyed and protected. No drainage study has been done; piecemeal development is going on throughout the Lower Little Survival watershed. The Hillside Drainage Study should be completed.

The Potter Marsh wildlife habitat cannot be protected without its principal watershed. Geologic features include an andesitic dike behind Potter Marsh. The area is threatened with development.

Recreational uses include skiing, hiking, sledding and snowmobiling. This is the last large tract of open space next to Seward Highway. One can see the unbroken view from saltwater to tundra.

**106. Moen Park:** Comments include recreation and other values. This is a good, untouched Hillside neighborhood park in an area subject to development. There is an adjacent elementary school and the loss of open space has begun the fragmentation process and may create a traffic problem.

**107. Goldenview Middle School:** Comments include wildlife habitat and environmental education values. This area is seen as a wildlife corridor off the road that connects to Little Rabbit Creek greenbelt. The open space is used for environmental education on wetlands for neighborhood students and needs to be retained.

**108. Upper Little Survival Creek:** Comments include recreation, aesthetic values, wildlife habitat, access, and other values.

Recreation in the area includes hiking, horseback riding, skiing and mountain biking along the Gasline and Jeep trails. People from other parts of town come here to use the area. A 20-acre park is proposed. Currently old homestead roads and game trails function as a trail system. If the area is developed there is a need for remaining open space with trails through it. Balsam poplar, large hemlock, and other vegetation make the aesthetics of the area park-like. The area looks beautiful from the Highway. The andesitic dike also provides aesthetic qualities.

Wildlife habitat is provided for raptors, including goshawks; there is a red tail hawk nest and lots of eagle perching sites. Kingfisher, scissor-billed chickadees, beaver, muskrats, violet-green swallows, downy and hairy woodpeckers, bear, wolves, coyotes and moose also use the area. Combined with Potter creek this area forms a wildlife corridor for mammals and passerines. If development occurs, it should be low density to decrease the effects on wildlife in the area.

The mouth of Little Survival Creek provides watershed functions as it supplies approximately 80% of the water to Potter's Marsh. Water is diverted near Goldenview and there are many small rivulets. There are now no roads cut through this large continuous block of open space. The area connects with the Potter Creek corridor. There are ephemeral creeks that provide surface water in the spring. Concerns over increased traffic congestion on windy Hillside roads if development should occur are present. The area provides a hydrologic buffer. One comment noted that access is important. The present 25 foot easement is not adequate for access, even for the landowners along the creek.

**109. Little Survival Creek Corridor:** Comments include recreation, access, aesthetic values, and wildlife habitat. Comments indicate that there is a need to create a watershed corridor along the entire length of Little Survival Creek and its tributaries. This is important for both public access and as a wildlife corridor. The area is a natural connection from Potter's Marsh to Chugach State Park and the alpine. The area (creek) needs to be correctly placed on the map. There is a perched culvert that impedes habitat. The area provides a place for moose to rest, brown and black bear frequent the area as well as lynx and coyotes. The area is steep and wet. Access is important. The present easement is not adequate. Area is a hydrologic buffer.

**110. Upper South Fork Little Campbell Creek:** Comments include presence of wildlife. Prime moose habitat.

111. **East Kincaid:** Comments include recreation, aesthetics, wildlife, access values as well as a general comment. The area is developing quickly. Trails provide access from new neighborhood to trails at Kincaid Park. This is an area for skiing and biking. It is also an essential place close to downtown for walking and biking and provides a reprieve from the city. It is full of recreational opportunities. Area is beautiful. Lost access to bluff and beach due to development. Do not want to lose access from the subdivision to the park. One commenter has lived here only one year and has already noted development in the area. Black bears, lynx, moose, owls and a variety of birds have been seen. It is important to maintain the wildlife corridors, such as those along the coastline. This area should remain a low impact versus an organized sporting recreation area. It is one of the Anchorage Blocks of the continuous Anchorage trail and open space system. This is a unique Anchorage amenity – trails that go from Hillside to the coast.

112. **Kincaid-Campbell North Trail:** Comments include access and recreation values. There needs to be a trail route from Kincaid entrance

113. **Kincaid-Campbell South Trail:** Comments include wildlife, recreation and access values. This area is an important link to habitat as well as an important link to Campbell Creek.

114. **Storck Park:** Comments include wildlife habitat and a general comment including hydrological values. This area has natural drainage in and north of Storck Park that should be protected. There may be fish habitat in the drainage.

115. **Lower O'Malley:** Comments include aesthetic and access values. One commenter loves looking at the large forested area when driving through this part of O'Malley. Proposed trail development links schools.

116. **MacBeth Drive:** Comments include aesthetic, wildlife and access values. The road connector is platted and neighborhood wants to leave MacBeth unconnected. It is a nice wood and pond area with ducks and fish. It also has access for children walking to school.

117. **Deleted – Part of Chugach State Park.**

118. **Winchester Park:** Comments include recreation value. This area is good for sledding and dog walking.

119. **SuperFund Site:** Comments include recreation and wildlife values. The area has been remediated and has been reseeded. Geese inhabit this area.

120. **80<sup>th</sup> Right of Way:** Comments include access values. There is recreational access to Abbott Loop Trail.

121. **Hillside-Birch-Huffman Area:** Comments include aesthetic, wildlife, access and other values. This is a beautiful undeveloped area. Fox, rabbits, eagles, and ravens live in the area near the marsh. This area is primarily used by neighborhood residents. Snowmachiners use undeveloped Huffman

Road. Huffman may be connected through this area with negative effect. There is a half mile strip of dirt trail along Huffman right of way.

122. **International and C Streets:** Comments include wildlife values. A wolf was seen in this area.

123. **Chugach State Foothills Park:** Values include recreational, aesthetic, access, and wildlife. This is an important open space for neighborhood enjoyment (for both its view and walking access). Protecting both sides of road would make a great tunnel and wildlife corridor. There is easy access to entire residential area. No roads need to be crossed for cycling and nature walking, which is a particular benefit for children. There are great views of Anchorage from here and recreation includes snowshoeing and sledding in the winter.

124. **New Seward/Tudor Open Space:** Comments include aesthetics, wildlife habitat, access and other comments. This area is unsuitable for building. The geographical location lends itself to be a prime visual park. It is composed of natural ponds and wet lands. It provides habitat for song birds and numerous other wildlife. It is easily accessible via Tudor Road and bike trails. It is important to the neighborhood and local community. This is a piece of wilderness for two neighborhoods and is a potential location for a greenbelt or trail corridor, extending from Fish Creek east to Waldron Lake and Bicentennial Park. It provides a buffer from Seward Highway.

125. **Behind British Petroleum:** Comments include aesthetic values. This is a nice break from the rest of the buildings in the area.

126. **Extension of Blueberry:** Comments include aesthetic values as well as a general comment. The area would be a good pocket park for neighborhood.

127. **Hillside in Spenard-North of North Star School:** Comments include access and aesthetic values. A trail provides access as well as aesthetic views.

128. **Bentzon Lake/Delaney Lake:** Comments include wildlife habitat, recreational, and aesthetic values. This is a favorite pond to watch for moose. This is one feature of a good Spenard evening walk. Great view driving down Minnesota or along bike trail.

129. **Buffer Strip Along New Seward Highway – North of Fireweed Lane:** Comments include aesthetic values and a general comment. This area provides a noise buffer area for nearby residents.

130. **North Muldoon/Northern Lights:** Comments include recreational, access, educational values and a general comment. Retention of native and mature forest, especially the older and more unique trees needs to be addressed. Focus on greenbelts and native woods on Hillside. Also should focus on wooded area in vicinity of Susitna School and Muldoon Carrs for school access. This would be a good spot for skiing and less intense recreation for kids as well as neighborhood use.

131. **Elmendorf/Boniface Gate:** Comments include wildlife and recreational values. Moose and bear have been seen in this area. Military families often walk, jog and stroll in this area.

132. **Tudor/Arctic Blvd:** Comments include aesthetic and recreational values. This is a wooded area, buffering the residential area from commercial and industrial development.

133. **Pop Carr:** Comments include recreational and aesthetic values. The little park is good for children to play. Easy access to get walking exercise.

134. **Tyson Elementary:** Comments include recreation and aesthetic values. The Mountain View area is in need of neighborhood parks.

135. **Lake Hood Elementary:** Comments include wildlife habitat, recreation, and aesthetic values. Moose, rabbit and fox have been seen in this area. It is nice to have greenery and trees in between the development. This area is great for walking.

136. **Outside Tudor Curve:** Comments include recreation, aesthetics, access and wildlife habitat values. This is important open space for neighborhood enjoyment for the view as well as walking. Protecting both sides of the road would make a great tunnel and wildlife corridor.

137. **Rabbit Lake Access:** Comments include recreation and access values. Concern that the trailhead to Rabbit Lake via Canyon Road will be overused during summer. This is an excellent alternative to the Glenn Alps and Prospect Heights area.

138. **Campbell Lake Shore:** Comments include recreation and access values. The area is part of the Anchorage Pathway Loop which connects Kincaid Park to Far North Bicentennial Park. Among some of the concepts of the Anchorage Pathway Loop, the trail would eventually connect all Anchorage schools providing for a safe and effective transportation route for school-aged children. It would also provide for recreational uses for athletic events and connect facilities such as UAA, Loussac Library and midtown and downtown businesses.

139. **Upper Furrow Creek:** Comments include recreational, aesthetic, access, wildlife habitat, educational and hydrological values.

#### **General Comments Regarding Anchorage Lands in the Bowl:**

- “Protect all the wildlife corridors – gone today, gone forever.” “How can we keep all the homes from building along the Coastal Trail and opening view to their yards to the detriment of the natural surroundings?” All the trails in Anchorage are important to maintain continuity. They are aesthetically important as well as important as a source of recreation and commuting. One participant uses the trail system for midtown/downtown commuting from home and also uses the trail between Goose Lake through Russian Jack to the Highway Bike Trail to Eagle River. Another participant suggests that adequate parking lots are needed at many of the busy parks, such as at Elderberry, King and along the Coastal Trail. Another participant suggests that there should be some kind of an environmental design standard for each area of the city, depending on that area’s use. These standards should be designed to guide “development” in the urban areas. For example, the Park Strip is a city treasure that provides recreation, aesthetic value, and wildlife use. The surrounding development should support the city’s designation of that area. A 500 room hotel built

up to the sidewalk with no landscaping or consideration of how people use or enjoy the Park Strip does not support our designation of the Park Strip as open space. Perhaps working together to develop landscaping and urban environmental design standards would encourage commercial development that would enhance our city's green spaces. Are there studies that provide information on the environmental impact of increased human and commercial use near such areas?

- A resident who has lived here for 48 years suggests that the McKay Building be demolished and turned into a park. The bluff area here is too unstable for big buildings. The area needs more green open space.
- Another resident who is elderly and disabled said that she lives in a trailer and likes the view of the treed lots near her West High neighborhood. She values the green space and trees near her home, which are on other private lots vs. the areas which lack greenbelts and are "all cement." There are a number of areas which need to have green areas added. Trees should be planted in crowded neighborhoods and trailer courts. The neighborhoods of Spenard, Midtown, Fairview, and Mountain View are too densely developed.
- Compliance with commercial, residential and environmental zoning regulations should be monitored and enforced.
- This open-house process should be duplicated in the Eagle River, Chugiak and Mat-Su area. This is especially needed in Eagle River where a lot of the Anchorage development has been deflected.
- Another participant said to "permanently protect all parts of the greenbelts and parks". They are the city's best features.
- With regard to South Anchorage, there are not enough neighborhood parks. There is very little infrastructure and few good trails and there needs to be more Chugach State Park access. There needs to be an acquisition or protection of parcels now before the planned extensive development starts. It would be great to link these areas with the rest of the city trail system.
- One participant appreciates the path in the Tudor Hills Court area. There needs to be one between Windflower and the Campbell Creek Greenbelt.
- Midtown needs more green space because it looks like a "grey, aesthetic desert". In addition, the participant wonders if there could be a way through the Comprehensive Plan to encourage property owners to leave portions of their property as natural areas, discouraging the turning of property into lawns. This could be an efficient way to provide the greenery, wildlife, sound absorption, and precipitation absorption benefits without the MOA or other entity having to own the land. Maybe a tax credit based upon the percentage of the property left undisturbed or restored. Another suggestion is to not focus open space acquisition on wetlands. There are other mechanisms for protecting wetlands. Uplands are developed without any public input. Instead, there should be a focus on acquiring creek and drainage corridors (pieces big enough for a one hour long walk).
- One comment comes from a resident who has lived in Anchorage for 21 years and has lived in a variety of parts of town. All of the green spaces are valuable for walking and for escaping the city for a brief time. The green areas are also valuable buffers and without them, Anchorage is an ugly city. Also, the Bragaw extension should not be completed as this will go through valuable wetlands. Since 1978, Anchorage has developed nearly 18,000 acres that were formerly green and open space areas. This is necessary to some degree if the city is to grow, but what are the city's goals? Do we really want the city to be like every other urban area in the United States? It is evident that Anchorage must greatly limit any more "hard" development or lose the qualities that draw people here.

- There is concern about the Turnagain wetlands area and other open spaces surrounding the airport. There is also a need to protect the area from noise impacts. In addition, the city has allowed industrial development to encroach on the beautiful Fish Creek. The greenbelt in this area needs to be protected; the riparian habitat needs to be acquired and the lower watershed restored. Finally, there is ugly development in Midtown, there is a lack of safe pedestrian/bicycle passage from Northern Lights Boulevard, Tudor Boulevard, Minnesota Boulevard and toward the mountains on Lake Otis. The sprawl is severe here and there is unnecessary ugliness.
- The railroad right of way links a lot of the parks and community facilities and provides for a natural area along the tracks. This is an important community asset far beyond simply serving the Alaska Railroad. In addition, the Coastal Refuge has wonderful views including “ghost” trees from the 1964 earthquake. The Coastal Flats and Point Campbell Beach are two excellent places to teach children about nature and outdoors. Would also like to see better access to the coast from south Anchorage.
- The remaining wetlands need to be preserved now and that landscaping should be mandatory for every business being built. Bike trails need to be networked and greenbelts should be established in all areas. In addition, the trees should not be cut down at the rate that has been the norm and more need to be planted.
- The natural woods along the Seward Highway in South Anchorage are pleasant for both the neighborhoods as well as the drivers. Unfortunately, much woodland is being cut down every year. Also, the undeveloped hillsides that drain into Potter Marsh via Little Rabbit Creek and Little Survival Creek need to be protected. Much of the land is private, some is held by Heritage Land Bank. The priorities should be to preserve critical watersheds as public, undeveloped land; require parts of private developments to be kept natural; and map the springs and rivulets that contribute to Little Rabbit Creek so that critical areas can be identified and protected. In addition, habitat for wildlife (birds, moose, etc) requires diverse vegetation. Some parks can be developed or “tidied up” by removing thickets, but most should be left natural except for the trails. Finally, research on birds and other wildlife is a use not mentioned. Several long term projects are on municipal park lands. Researchers hope their study areas do not change – many projects would have to be prematurely terminated if areas altered.
- Anchorage was listed in the top 10 or 20 cities in offering parks, trails and recreational facilities. “Let’s keep this and move up on the list. That’s why we all moved here.”
- Although small acre sites have importance, larger tracts of land that provide corridors or sufficient land areas for home ranges are more important for wildlife and recreational use.
- Polaris School Gardens are terrific and making lots of progress.
- One participant has enjoyed the use of McHugh Creek for 50 years and Elderberry Park for 56 years. In addition, the land that Elmendorf took during WWII is the best land in Anchorage. The AFB should return the lakes back to the MOA.
- There should be more picnic areas for families that cannot get out of town in the summer. Also would like to see and have more trails along the creeks.
- The Sitka Street Park is a good place to look for wetland plants. It is not well known so it is not overcrowded.

**Comments Regarding Military Lands and Developed Lands:**

- Independence Park area needs access under Seward Highway. There are a lot of homes, but no access.
- Seward Highway is great for bike recreation and rollerskiing.
- Elmendorf AFB lands are great for recreation. The Air Force maintains trails and the MOA should see if the military would be open to some sort of joint-use agreement for sharing the open space on EAFB. There is excellent wildlife habitat for moose, bear, foxes and so on.
- Cherry Hill Creek has hiking and skiing recreational areas. Wildlife includes red fox, merlin and shorebirds. The military owns this land.
- Green Lake and Otter Lake (on military land) has educational, recreational, and wildlife values. School field days are nice here. It is a good model for ecological processes. It has fishing and boating opportunities. This area would be perfect for activities like those that happen at the BLM science center. The military should give this land back because it is the nicest in the Anchorage Bowl.