Unit 7a - Gold Creek / Mount Roberts

Background[12]

This unit consists primarily of the higher slopes of Mount Roberts and Mount Juneau, the upper Gold Creek drainage, and the tidelands and submerged lands adjacent to Cross Bay Creek. The lower elevation land in Gold Creek valley and the land along Thane Road are primarily private lands and patented mining claims, some of which are owned by the City and Borough of Juneau.

Gold Creek is the primary source of the Juneau municipal water supply. CBJ is developing a Watershed Control and Protection Program for consideration and approval by CBJ and EPA.

This management unit is also a popular recreation area, particularly for hiking. The Perseverance, Mount Juneau, Mount Roberts, and Granite Creek State Trails are some of the most popular in the Juneau area. An ILMT (ADL 65585) transferred management of the Perseverance, Mount Juneau, Mount Roberts, and Granite Creek State Trails to DPOR. The Basin Road and associated trailhead, historic buildings, and salmon bake receive high use by local residents and tourists. The Thane Road, which parallels Subunit 7a1, is popular for bicycling, jogging, and sightseeing.

Pending Applications. Subunits 7a28, 7a29, and 7a30, in the very eastern part of this management unit, have pending authorizations for underground support and access facilities for reopening the A-J Mine. The ore body is on patented mining claims. Specific underground uses in Unit 7a proposed for state land by Echo Bay Exploration are the Bradley Millsite, adits, a ramp, and waste rock adit.

Mining and Mineral Potential. Extensive mining activity in the past, including the A-J Mine and Perseverance Mine, occurred on patented mining claims that are in this management unit. The A-J Mine was once one of the world's largest low-grade underground gold mines. The orebody is a large, uniform tabular deposit which strikes northwest to southeast, and dips moderately to steeply northeast away from Juneau under Mount Roberts and the Silverbow Basin. An estimated 106 million tons of ore with an average content of 0.047 ounces of gold per ton would be mined over a 13-year period. The proposed mining operation would produce 4.6 million ounces of refined gold, about 4.4 million cubic yards of waste rock, and about 84.0 million yards of tailings. Capital costs of construction of the project are estimated to be $307 million.

With the exception of the northernmost part of this unit, all state lands have high mineral potential. There are numerous state mineral locations both on state uplands and state tidelands.

12 For a more thorough description of the resources and uses in this unit see, "*A-J Mine Project FEIS, BLM 1992.*"

Management Intent

Since Gold Creek is the major and only source of non-surface water for the CBJ municipal water supply, a high priority will be placed on protecting Gold Creek for water quality and quantity. Providing water for the hydroelectric power facility and mining is also a priority. Gold Creek will also be managed to support the recreation and wildlife values that are heavily used by tourists and residents of Juneau. This unit will also be managed to maintain and enhance dispersed recreation and wildlife values.

Management Guidelines

CBJ Watershed Control Program. In order to protect one of the two main CBJ water supplies, when CBJ formalizes it's Watershed Control and Protection Program by ordinance for Gold Creek, DNR will manage state lands in this watershed consistent with this program. This may include implementation of mineral orders that may be adopted without an amendment to the plan.

Threatened Plants. On Mt. Roberts (Subunit 7a28), the following rare plant species have been documented by the Alaska Natural Heritage Program (ANHP).[13] Activities in these areas should be conducted in a manner that avoids disturbance to these plants:

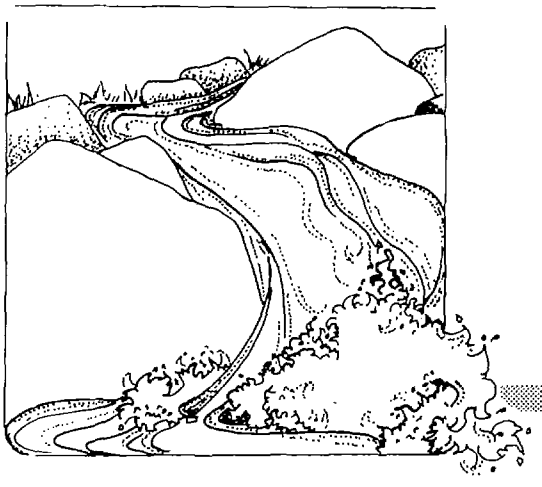
- *Salix Reticulata ssp. glabellicarpa:* located on the Mount Roberts Trail below the summit of Gastineau Peak.
- *Arnica lessingil ssp. norbergii*: located on a rocky ledge on Gastineau Peak at 3,500 feet elevation along the Mount Roberts Trail.
- *Carex lenticularis var. dolia*: located in a snowbed meadow at 2,000 feet elevation along the Mount Roberts Trail.
- *Gentianella propinqua ssp. aleutica*: located high on the Mount Roberts Trail in grass.

13 ANHP has maps which show the location of these plants.

Land-Use Designation Summary

For keys to the one-letter and two-letter abbreviations used in this table, see the beginning of this chapter.

UNIT 7A: GOLD CREEK/MT. ROBERTS						
Area no. & name	DNR designation	CBJ zoning district	Land type	Adjacent ownership	Resource or use	Other comments
7a1 Cross Creek	Sh	D-1	T	Private		
7a4	Hb Hv	RR	SU	State	Herring overwintering; Sheep Creek Hatchery cost recovery fishery	
7a25	Rd W	RR	UP	State/ Private	Scenic backdrop to downtown Juneau; in Gold Creek watershed protection area	
7a26	Ha Rd W	RR	UP	State/ Private	Black bear spring habitat; Mt. Juneau State Trail passes through area; scenic backdrop to Juneau; in Gold Creek watershed protection area	
7a27	Rd W	OS	UP	State/ Private	In Gold Creek and Granite Creek watershed protection areas; Granite Creek State Historic Trail crosses state land; Perseverance State Trail adjacent to area; scenic	Potential for extension of Perseverance trail up Gold Creek
7a28 Gastineau Peak	Rd W	RR	UP	State/ Private	In Gold Creek watershed protection area; Mt. Roberts Historic Trail crosses the area; scenic	New trail potential between Sheep Mountain and Roberts Peak
7a29	Ha Rd	RR	UP	State	Scenic; goat winter habitat	
7a30	Ha Rd	RR	UP	State/ Private	Black bear spring and fall habitat	
7a31	Ha	RR	UP	State/ USFS	Winter goat habitat	
7a32	Ha Rd W	RR	UP	Private/ USFS	Winter goat habitat; in Gold Creek watershed protection area	New trail potential between Sheep Mountain and Roberts Peak; also potential for new trails from Gold Creek Basin to Sheep Mountain
7a33	Ha Rd W	RR	UP	State/ Private	Winter goat habitat; Gold Creek watershed protection area	

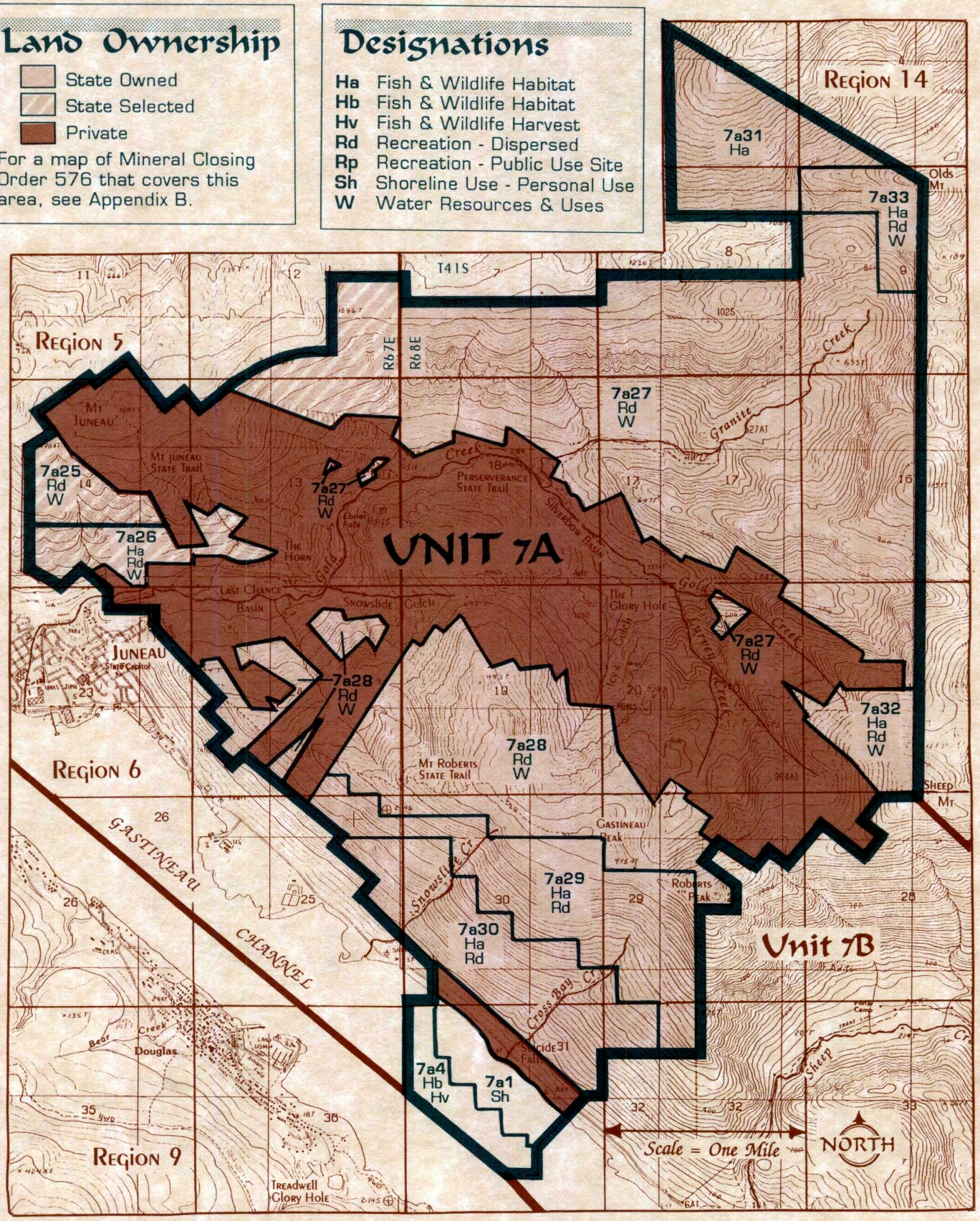


UNIT 7A - Gold Creek / Mount Roberts

Land Ownership

- State Owned
- State Selected
- Private

For a map of Mineral Closing Order 576 that covers this area, see Appendix B.

Designations

Ha	Fish & Wildlife Habitat
Hb	Fish & Wildlife Habitat
Hv	Fish & Wildlife Harvest
Rd	Recreation - Dispersed
Rp	Recreation - Public Use Site
Sh	Shoreline Use - Personal Use
W	Water Resources & Uses