

**STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

**DIVISION OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION**

**MAT-SU AREA**

**FIVE-YEAR SCHEDULE OF TIMBER SALES**

**CY 2024-2028**



**DNR Division of Forestry & Fire Protection  
550 West 7<sup>th</sup> Ave, Suite 1450  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501  
907-269-8400**

**August 20, 2024**

**Steve Connelly  
Coastal Region Forester**

**Stephen Nickel  
Mat-Su/Southwest Area Forester**

## Purpose of the Five-Year Schedule of Timber Sales

The Five-Year Schedule of Timber Sales (FYSTS), published every two years, identifies areas where the Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) Division of Forestry & Fire Protection (DOF) is planning timber sales. The Five-Year Schedule is meant to inform the public, timber industry, local governments, and other agencies of potential State timber sales, and solicit their input to help us better plan our sale program. The Five-Year Schedule is a scoping document, not a decision document, and is therefore not appealable under AS 38.05.035.

This Five-Year Schedule meets the statutory requirements of AS 38.05.113 and acts as a basis for allocating departmental resources in considering, designing and conducting timber sales. Volume and harvest information is based on the calendar year. This document does not include harvests proposed by the University of Alaska or the Alaska Mental Health Land Trust.

This Five-Year Schedule provides information to the public concerning development and use of State Forest resources in the Mat-Su Area (MSA) for the period of January 1, 2024, to December 31, 2028. The DOF bases the Five-Year Schedule on State Land that is classified for timber harvest and is identified in area management plans. Area management plans are long range planning documents prepared by DNR to determine the use of State land in regional areas, such as *Southeast Susitna Area Plan* and *Susitna Matanuska Area Plan*. The areas targeted for timber harvest and development are based on the management intent of the Area Plans and are quantified in this Five-Year Schedule based on aerial photo inventory. This data is augmented by limited ground reconnaissance and historical knowledge accumulated by personnel working in the area.

All State timber sales must comply with the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act, published in Alaska Statutes (AS) 41.17.010-950, also in Alaska Administrative Code (AAC), Title 11 Natural Resources, 95.185-255), and cited in the Alaska Land Act, including its procedures and regulations, reference Alaska Statutes § 38.05.005 (2023). Additionally, all State timber sales must adhere to area-wide and site-specific land management policies for each management unit of DNR area plans.

After adopting the Five-Year Schedule, the DOF conducts more detailed fieldwork, to assess and design proposed sales. Before a commercial timber sale of ten acres or larger is offered, the DOF will prepare a Best Interest Finding (BIF) for agency and public review and comment. Based on the comments received, the DOF will issue a Final Best Interest Finding to determine whether the timber sale is in the State's best interest or not. The Final BIF is appealable under AS 38.05.035.

Prior to harvest, a Forest Land Use Plan (FLUP) will be developed, describing site-specific information for each sale including: the location, access, estimated timber volume, harvest methods, the reforestation plan, and citing other potential uses of the sale area. Other State agencies and the public have the opportunity to review and comment on each FLUP. Significant concerns or mitigation needs that arise during the review period are addressed by the DOF before the sale proceeds. The final BIF, not the FYSTS, is the document that decides whether the Division will offer a timber sale or not. The FLUP follows, as the State's specific logging plan for that sale. If a sale was offered, but not purchased, or if a sale was purchased but not harvested, wholly or in part, the remaining timber may be sold without reappearing in a FYSTS or in a BIF, or if conditions warrant, a new FLUP may be issued.

## Management Intent of the DOF Timber Sale Program

The goals of the timber sale program are to make timber available for existing timber harvesting and processing businesses, and to create the kind of forest biodiversity that will provide additional future jobs and income while maintaining compatibility with other designated land uses. Harvesting is designed to promote forest health and diversity and to meet forest management goals that provide additional benefits, including diverse forest habitats and long-term supplies of many forest products. DOF develops FYSTS biennially and may write them annually if market and stand conditions warrant a change in management. Timber sales are offered in a range of volumes and contract periods to accommodate the demands of the forest industry, the public, and forest management goals. Sale offerings will be subject to access conditions, markets, the limits of the annual allowable cut, public comment, and DOF staffing and funding to design and administer timber sales.

The DOF will coordinate timber sales with timber sale offerings of other landowners when it will be in both the landowner's and State's best interest. Opportunities for cooperative timber sales will be identified, in part, through public and agency review of the FYSTS.

### Mat-Su Area

The Mat-Su Area covers most of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and the Municipality of Anchorage and is bounded by Girdwood and Turnagain Arm on the south, the Alaska Range on the west, Denali National Park on the north, and the Talkeetna Mountains on the east, depicted in Appendix I.

Timber sales included in this Schedule are within 8 Timber Blocks (Harvest Zones). Refer to Appendix II for a Map of Mat-Su Region Harvest Blocks.

- |                                |
|--------------------------------|
| 1 PETERSVILLE                  |
| 2 OILWELL                      |
| 3 FISH CREEK (EAST & CENTRAL)  |
| 4 WILLER-KASH                  |
| 5 RABIDEUX CREEK               |
| 6 HOUSTON-ZERO LAKE            |
| 7 SUNSET                       |
| 8 MATANUSKA VALLEY MOOSE RANGE |

## Annual Allowable Cut (AAC)

The Division of Forestry is mandated to manage its timber harvest on a sustained yield basis. ‘Sustained Yield’ means the “achievement and maintenance in perpetuity of an annual or regular periodic output of the various renewable resources of the State land consistent with multiple use” (AS 38.04.910). ‘Sustained Yield’ is also mandated in the Constitution of the State of Alaska, Article 8, Section 4. To fulfill this mandate, the DOF uses annual allowable cut (AAC) calculations, which is the average amount of timber that may be cut from a forest to maintain a balance between net growth and harvest, while meeting the management intent for the land. AAC estimates the maximum amount of timber that can be harvested each year while maintaining sustainability of the timber. The DOF utilizes the AAC to develop the amount of timber proposed for sale in the FYSTS. For a variety of planning and logistical reasons, the DOF will typically designate a variety of proposed timber sale configurations; some amounting to more than the AAC for a given year. However, the acres cut will remain inside the AAC when averaged on a decadal basis (or the five-year basis as required by SFG). To this end, the DOF may write a FYSTS more often to accommodate changes in forest management timing and keep the public informed of its actions.

The annual allowable cut for the Mat-Su Area was established by the *Susitna Forestry Guidelines (SFG)*. The SFG further divides the Mat-Su Area into three phases: Phase I east of the Susitna River, Phase II west of the Susitna River, and Phase III west of the Kahiltna River. Each Phase has its own AAC calculation with all proposed activities during this schedule’s period directed towards Phase I. For this schedule, average cubic feet per acre was applied to existing data to arrive at an estimated AAC. The AAC will be updated as soon as new data is received.

### Annual Allowable Cut

<u>Phase</u>	<u>Allowable Cut</u>
Phase I	1,400 acres/year

#### Estimated Proposed Area to be Sold Each Calendar year (2024-2028)

<b>2024:</b>	<b>684 Acres</b>
<b>2025:</b>	<b>1,285 Acres</b>
<b>2026:</b>	<b>1,198 Acres</b>
<b>2027:</b>	<b>938 Acres</b>
<b>2028:</b>	<b>836 Acres</b>
<b><i>Estimated Total:</i></b>	<b><u>4,941 Acres</u></b>

### Timber Harvest Methodology

The Mat-Su Area will use harvest methods to encourage and enhance the establishment of seedlings produced by seeds from residual trees and the surrounding forest. Due to the extensive mortality of spruce caused by the recent spruce beetle outbreak, most of the silvicultural treatments will include removing dead trees and leaving live spruce less than a defined DBH. Live pole, sapling, and seedling-sized white spruce will be protected, to the fullest extent possible, to provide a stand of uneven age structure for the next rotation. Usually, natural regeneration provides adequate spruce reforestation. Methodologies will strive to protect next generation spruce seed sources. In most birch and aspen stands, the seed tree harvest silvicultural method will be employed. Natural seed regeneration and stump sprouting will provide regeneration in hardwood stands. Harvest areas using the seed tree methods will be mechanically scarified to create soil conditions conducive to the establishment of natural seedlings. In areas of high spruce stem counts, selective cutting of spruce may occur.

## Transportation

Multiple use values will be considered when roads are located, designed, and developed, and will reflect the management intent and primary uses for the planning area. Proposed access routes and types of access for the first years of this schedule are shown on the attached maps. As management objectives are met for an area, roads may be put to bed, and access to the road will be restricted to off-highway vehicle traffic to reduce maintenance costs and minimize degradation of the road and surrounding area. Best Interest Findings for individual sales will fully discuss access types, locations, and management objectives based upon information gathered in the field.

## State Land Use Plans

The strategic plan for the Mat-Su Area is to provide wood fiber for the local forest products industry in a manner that is compatible with the sustained yield of the renewable timber resource. The intent of the timber sale program is to support the local small independent sawmills, provide commercial and personal use firewood sales, and potentially supply wood fiber for a biofuels or wood chip market. A biofuel or wood chip market would enable the DOF to manage the many older, declining stands in the Mat-Su Valley, regenerate younger forests and improve forest health. All harvesting for this FYSTS is planned for Phase I (Eastside) Susitna Forest Guidelines (SFG). DOF is beginning the process of developing a forest management plan for the forest classified lands in the Susitna Valley, with the goal of updating the guidelines with a plan that is based on current industry needs, market conditions and the latest science. This FYSTS contains harvest units that meet SFG in the near term, and harvest units in later years that reflect an anticipated change in forest management guidelines.

The schedule also reflects the Division of Forestry's objective to offer timber sales to meet market demand, salvage dead timber, and reduce the wildfire hazard by harvesting spruce beetle killed trees. Sales are broken up into numerous units. Small to medium-size sales will be offered to meet current demand for sawlogs, house logs and fuel wood. Sales within the wildland-urban interface will be designed to reduce the risk of wildfire to the communities.

For maps and more information on the effects of the Spruce Beetle, visit the Division of Forestry's website: <http://forestry.alaska.gov/insects/surveys> for a current copy of the Alaska Forest Insect and Disease Survey.

The area plans may be found on the web at:  
<http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/mlw/planning/areaplans/>.

The management plans and the *Susitna Forestry Guidelines* are on the web at:  
<http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/mlw/planning/mgtplans/>.

## Timber Sales by Year: Mat-Su Area

\*\* Refer to Appendix III for a Map of each Harvest Block.

YEAR /TOTAL	TIMBER BLOCK (Harvest Zone)	AREA (Acres, estimated)
<b>2024</b>	PETERSVILLE	145.5
Estimated Total: <b>684.4 Acres</b>	OILWELL	0
	FISH CREEK (EAST & CENTRAL)	0
	WILLER-KASH	0
	RABIDEUX CREEK	0
	HOUSTON-ZERO LAKE	350.2
	SUNSET	188.7
	MATANUSKA VALLEY MOOSE RANGE	0
<b>2025</b>	PETERSVILLE	169.3
Estimated Total: <b>1285.1 Acres</b>	OILWELL	0
	FISH CREEK (EAST & CENTRAL)	420.2
	WILLER-KASH	166.1
	RABIDEUX CREEK	0
	HOUSTON-ZERO LAKE	306.9
	SUNSET	196.6
	MATANUSKA VALLEY MOOSE RANGE	26
<b>2026</b>	PETERSVILLE	111.6
Estimated Total: <b>1198.3 Acres</b>	OILWELL	0
	FISH CREEK (EAST & CENTRAL)	536.9
	WILLER-KASH	159.9
	RABIDEUX CREEK	0
	HOUSTON-ZERO LAKE	182
	SUNSET	187.7
	MATANUSKA VALLEY MOOSE RANGE	20.2
<b>2027</b>	PETERSVILLE	131.7
Estimated Total: <b>937.5 Acres</b>	OILWELL	130.3
	FISH CREEK (EAST & CENTRAL)	326.8
	WILLER-KASH	60.4
	RABIDEUX CREEK	0
	HOUSTON-ZERO LAKE	233.5
	SUNSET	0
	MATANUSKA VALLEY MOOSE RANGE	54.8
<b>2028</b>	PETERSVILLE	0
Estimated Total: <b>835.8 Acres</b>	OILWELL	149.9
	FISH CREEK (EAST & CENTRAL)	526
	WILLER-KASH	0
	RABIDEUX CREEK	119.5
	HOUSTON-ZERO LAKE	0
	SUNSET	0
	MATANUSKA VALLEY MOOSE RANGE	40.4

## Timber Sale Descriptions

Following are descriptions of potential timber sales, organized by tentatively planned year and location. Please note that while timber sales slated for 2024 and 2025 are discussed in this Five-Year Schedule narrative, maps depict all preliminarily planned timber sales from 2024 through 2028. If a sale listed in this Schedule is offered, but not purchased, and has reappeared in two consecutive FYSTS or in another FLUP with BIF, the sale may be re-offered.

### 2024 Timber Sales

#### Petersville Timber Block

This timber block is located ten miles west of the community of Trapper Creek, Alaska, south of Petersville Road. Six units, totaling 145.5 acres ranging in size from 4.2 to 45 acres, are planned for this area in 2024 and are located south of Petersville Road. These units may be sold as individual sales or grouped together and sold as larger sales. An old winter logging road on the south side of the Petersville Road will need to be reconditioned for approximately 1 mile and utilized for initial access into the northern units.

#### Houston/Sunset Timber Block

Seven harvest units are planned for sale, which are located at the base of the Talkeetna Mountains north of the Little Susitna River and will be accessed using either the East Fork of Zero Lake Road from the west, or from Sunset/Nightfall Road from the east. The units total 538.9 acres and will be designed to conform to the Susitna Forestry Guidelines as well as natural features such as rolling topography, timber type, and wetlands. These units may be sold as individual sales or grouped together and sold as larger sales.

### 2025 Timber Sales

#### Petersville Timber Block

This timber block, containing four units, is located ten miles west of the community of Trapper Creek, Alaska, and south of Petersville Road. These units range in size from 35 to 49 acres and total 169.3 acres. These units may be sold as individual sales or grouped together and sold as larger sales. An old winter logging road, reconditioned as part of the 2015 timber sale program, and an additional 0.5 miles of new winter road construction, will be needed for access.

#### Houston/Sunset Timber Block

Seven harvest units are planned for sale in 2025. These units are located at the base of the Talkeetna Mountains north of the Little Susitna River and will be accessed using either the east fork of Zero Lake Road from the west, or from Sunset/Nightfall Road from the east. The units total 503.5 acres and will be designed to conform to the Susitna Forestry Guidelines as well as natural features such as rolling topography, timber type, and wetlands. These units may be sold as individual sales or grouped together and sold as larger sales.

#### Willar-Kash Timber Block

This timber block is located approximately seven miles east of the community of Willow at the foot of Willow Mountain and north of Willow Creek. 166.1 acres are projected for harvest in 4 units ranging in size from 32 to 49 acres. These units may be grouped together or sold separately.

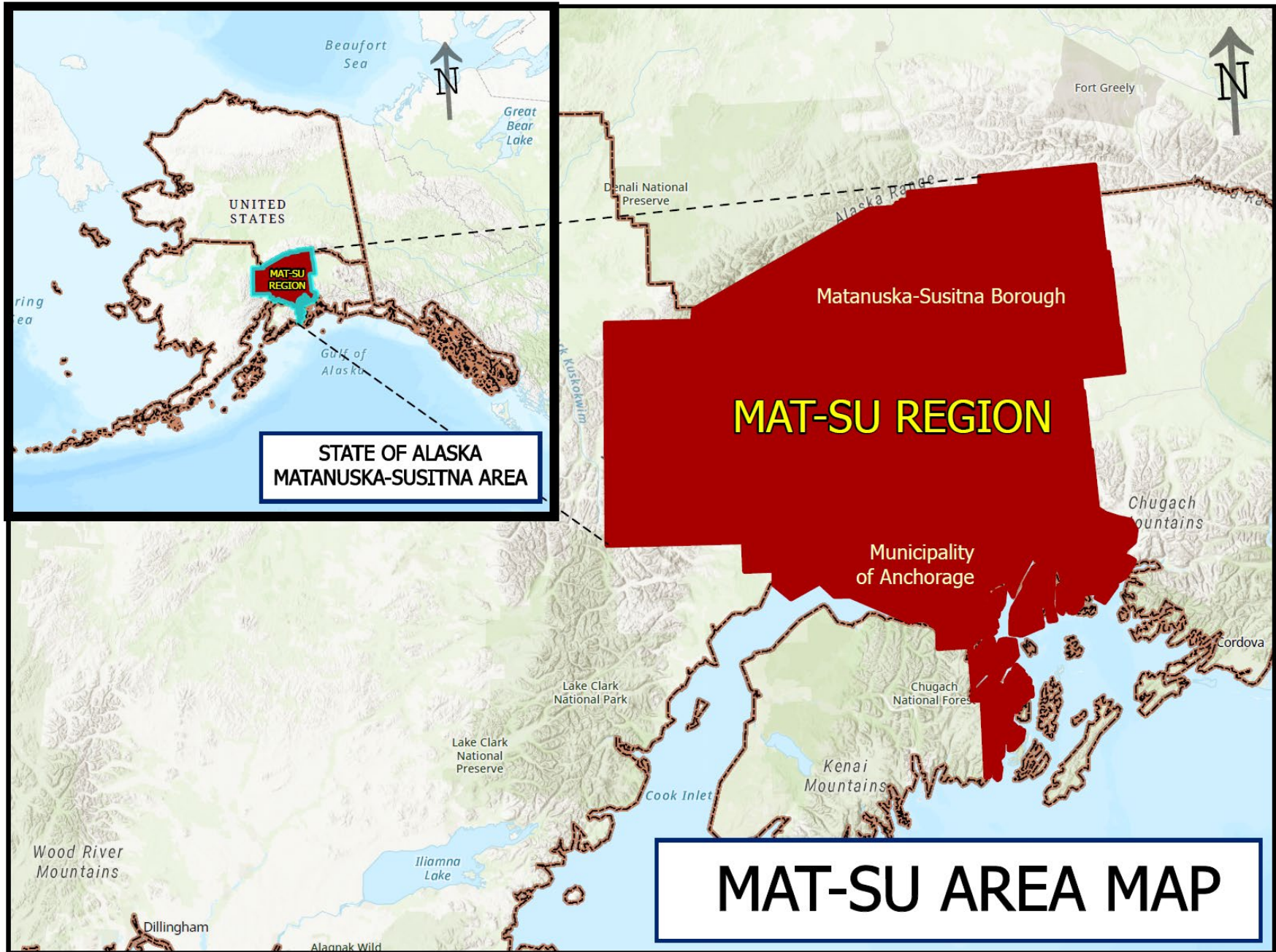
#### Matanuska Valley Moose Range

This timber block is located six miles northwest of Palmer, with access from Boyd Road. A single unit of 26 acres is planned for 2025. An old forestry road is the proposed primary access into the unit with approximately 1/10<sup>th</sup> of a mile to be improved. This sale will be designed in cooperation with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to ensure that wildlife habitat needs are incorporated in the harvest prescription.

#### Fish Creek Timber Block

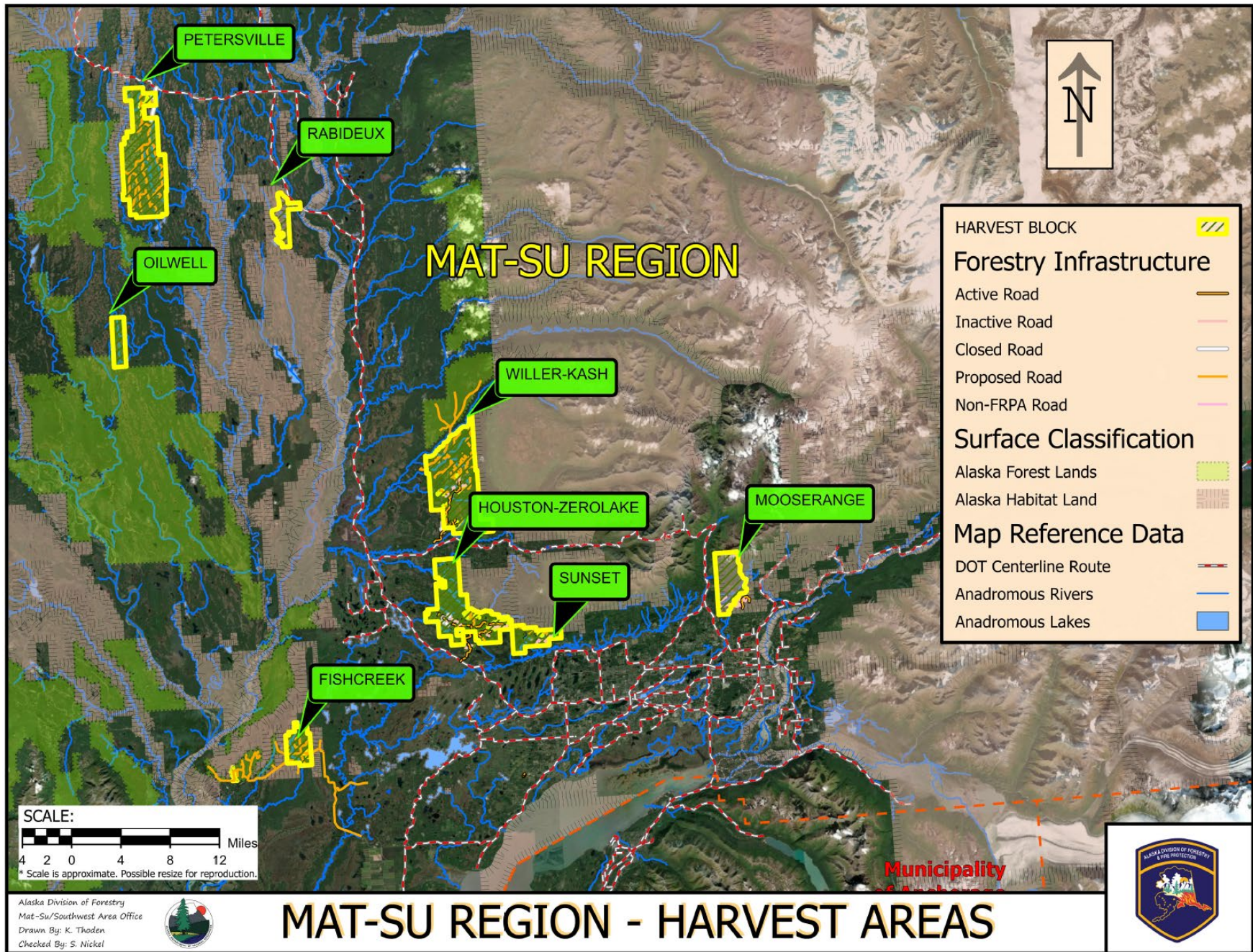
Located approximately 13 miles west of the community of Big Lake, this timber block is accessed via a winter road off the end of West Susitna Parkway. The road was cleared in 2014 and some regrowth should be anticipated within the alignment. A bridge will need to be installed to cross the Little Susitna River approximately 1.8 miles west of the termination of West Susitna Parkway. The cleared winter road continues toward the units, terminating on the east side of the sale area. Off the end of this road, a new primary road approximately 0.1 miles in length, needs to be constructed to access the first unit. Additional roads will need to be constructed to continue access into the sale area. Four units are planned, ranging in size from 40 to 141 acres, and combined are a total of 420.2 acres. These units may be sold as individual sales or grouped together and sold as larger sales.

\* Appendix I: Mat-Su Area Map





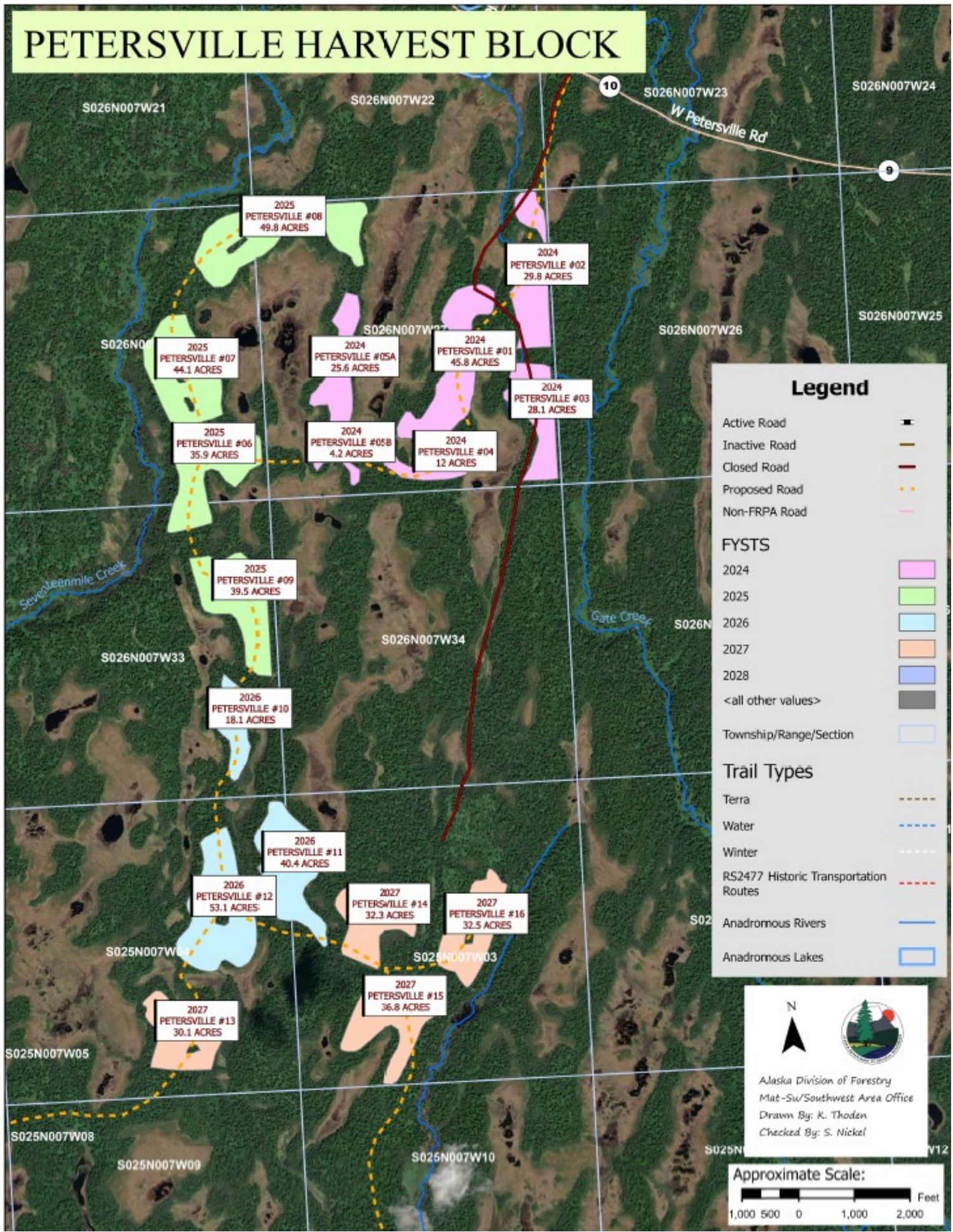
**\*\* Appendix II: Mat-Su Region – Harvest Areas**



**\*\*\* Appendix III: Harvest Block Maps (Plan Views)**

<b>Timber Block</b>	<b>Page</b>
PETERSVILLE	11
RABIDEUX CREEK	12
OILWELL	13
WILLER-KASH	14
HOUSTON-ZERO LAKE	15
SUNSET	16
MATANUSKA VALLEY MOOSE RANGE	17
FISH CREEK	18

# PETERSVILLE HARVEST BLOCK



# RABIDEUX CREEK HARVEST BLOCK

### Legend

- Active Road
- Inactive Road
- Closed Road
- Proposed Road
- Non-FRPA Road

### FYSTS

- 2024
- 2025
- 2026
- 2027
- 2028
- <all other values>

### Township/Range/Section

- 

### Trail Types

- Terra
- Water
- Winter
- RS2477 Historic Transportation Routes

### Anadromous Rivers

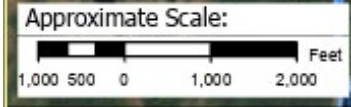
- 

### Anadromous Lakes

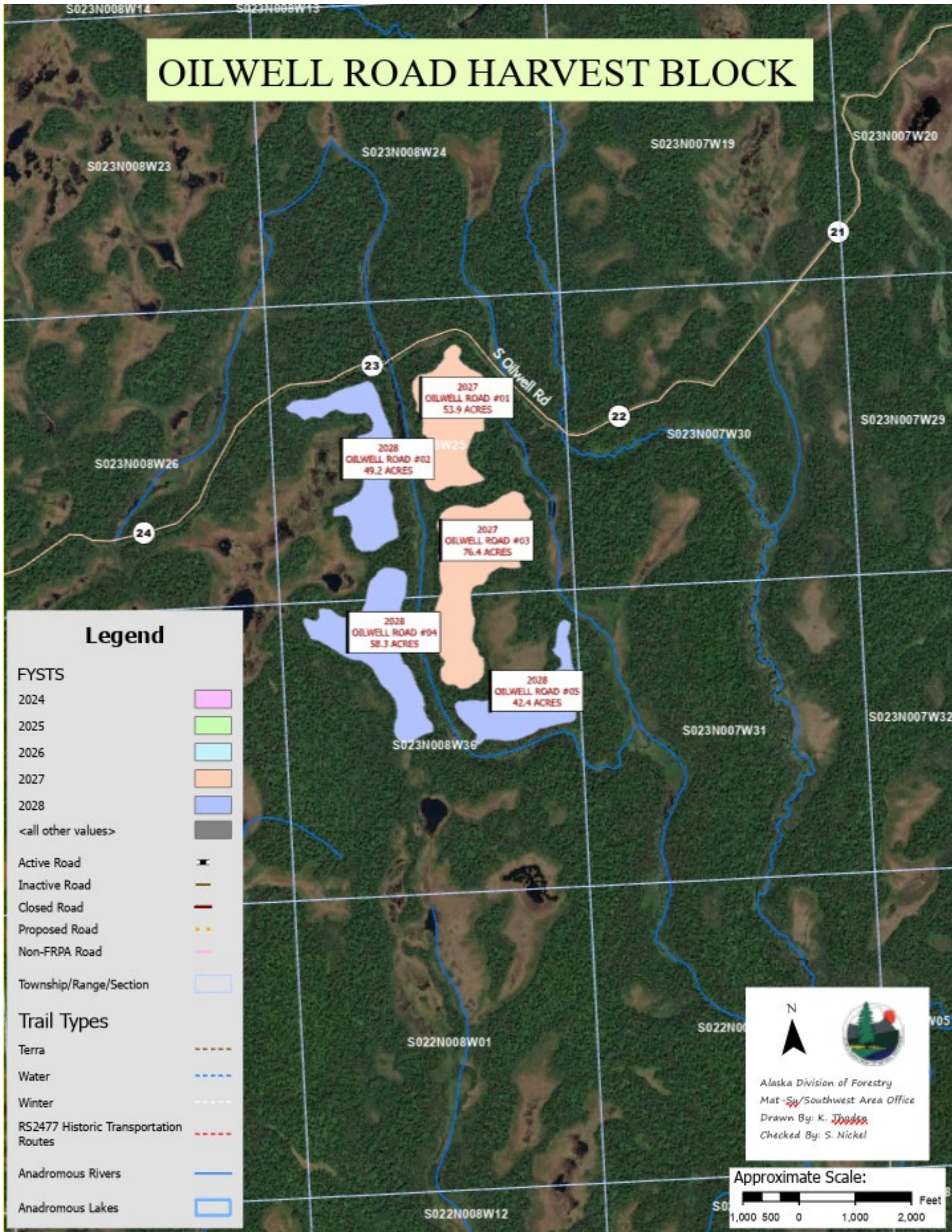
- 



Alaska Division of Forestry  
Mat-Su/Southwest Area Office  
Drawn By: K. ~~Tobias~~  
Checked By: S. Nickel



# OILWELL ROAD HARVEST BLOCK



## Legend

FYSTS	
2024	
2025	
2026	
2027	
2028	
<all other values>	

Active Road	
Inactive Road	
Closed Road	
Proposed Road	
Non-FRPA Road	
Township/Range/Section	

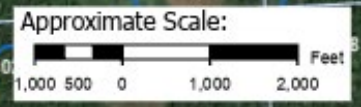
Trail Types	
Terra	
Water	
Winter	
RS2477 Historic Transportation Routes	

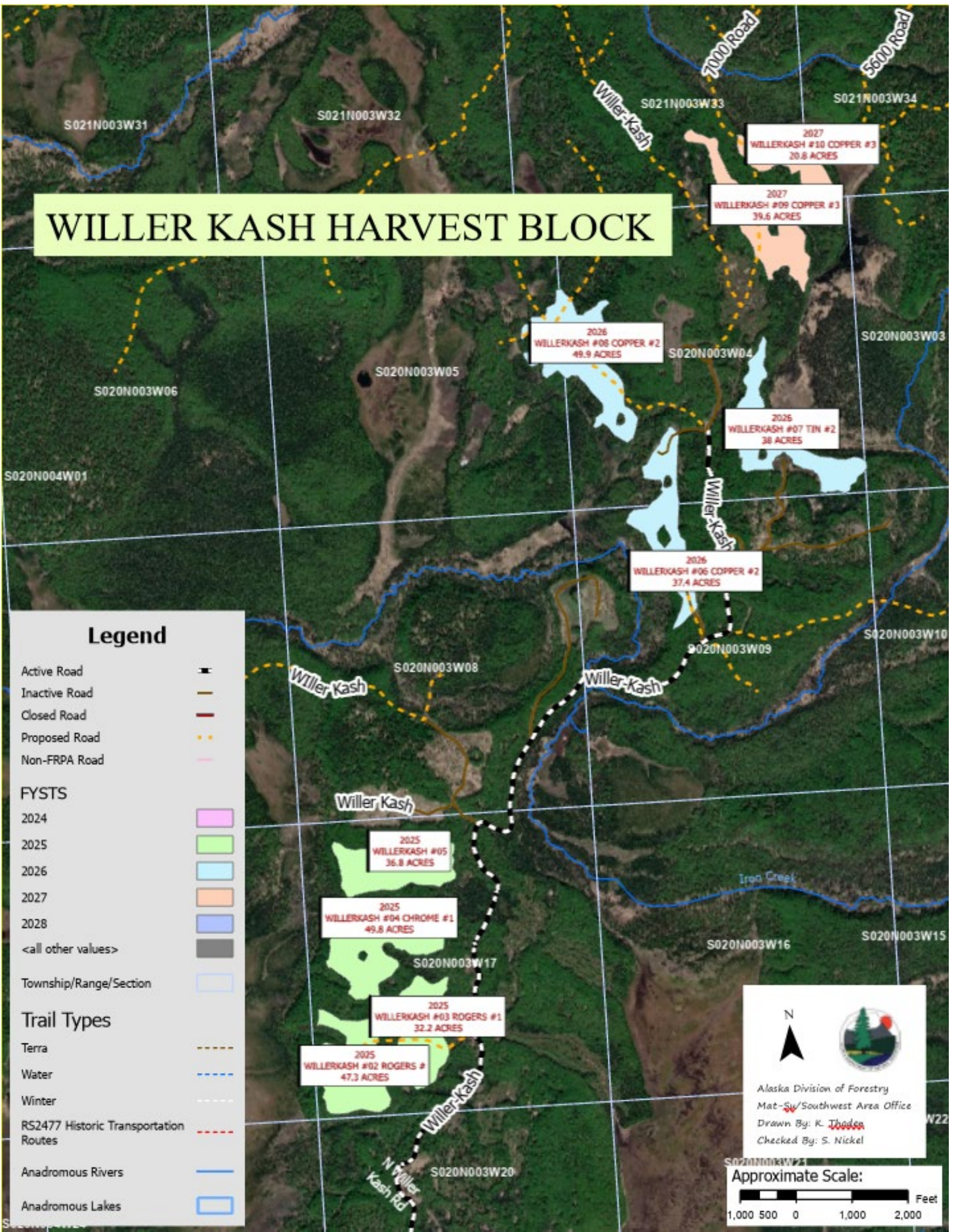
Anadromous Rivers	
Anadromous Lakes	

N

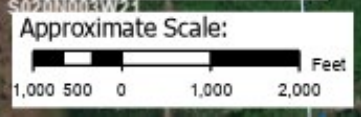
Alaska Division of Forestry  
 Mat-Su/Southwest Area Office  
 Drawn By: K. *Jordan*  
 Checked By: S. Nickel



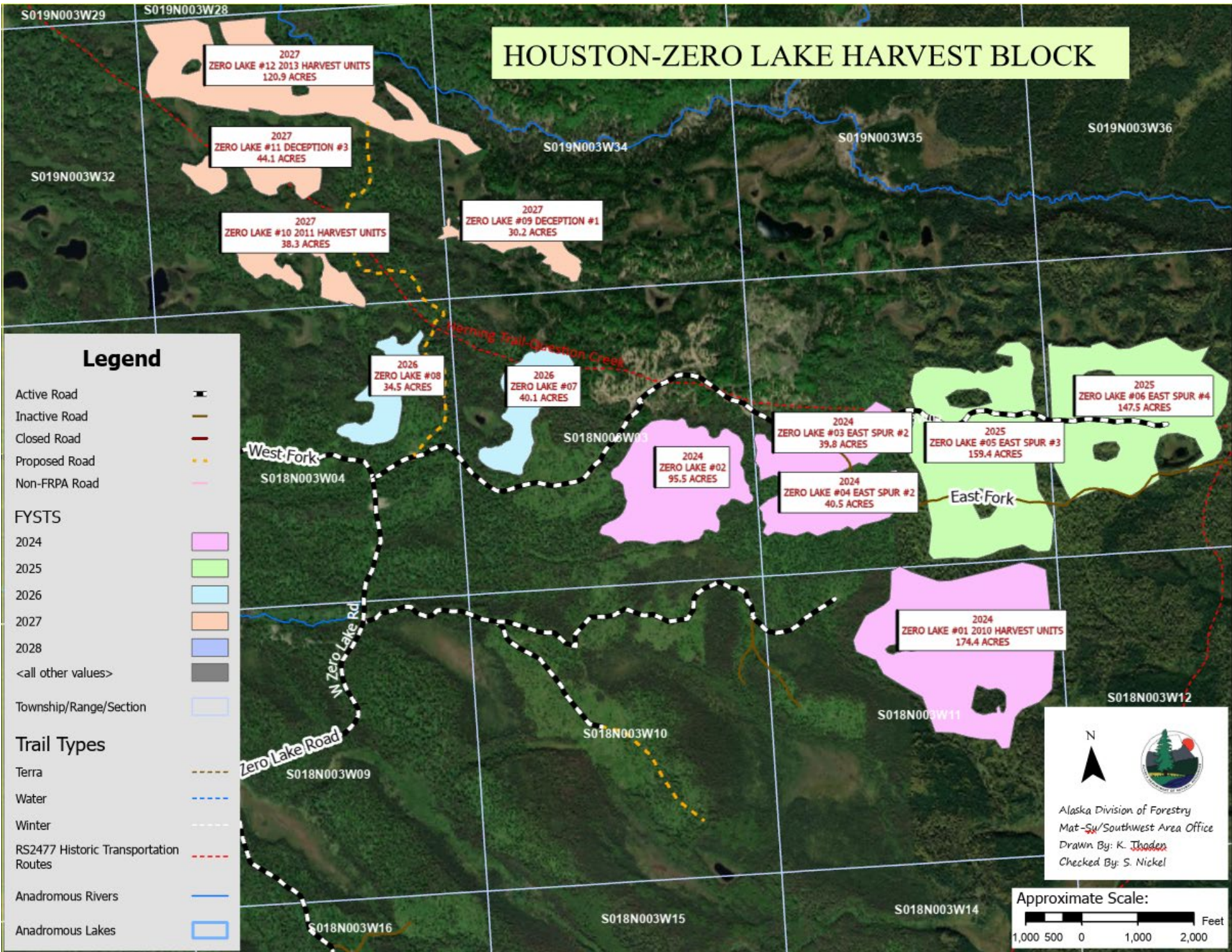
# WILLER KASH HARVEST BLOCK




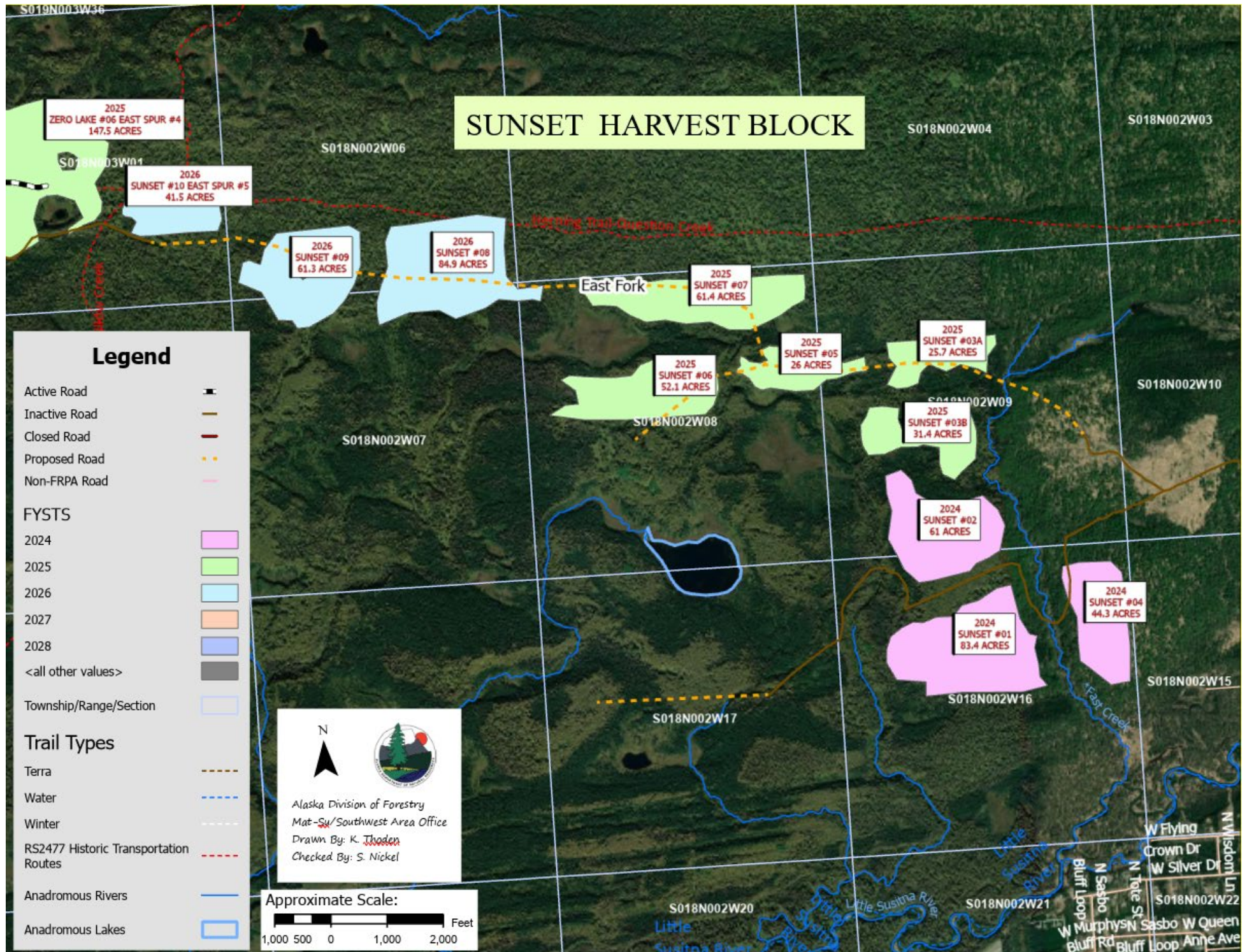
Alaska Division of Forestry  
 Mat-Su Southwest Area Office  
 Drawn By: K. Thoden  
 Checked By: S. Nickel



# HOUSTON-ZERO LAKE HARVEST BLOCK

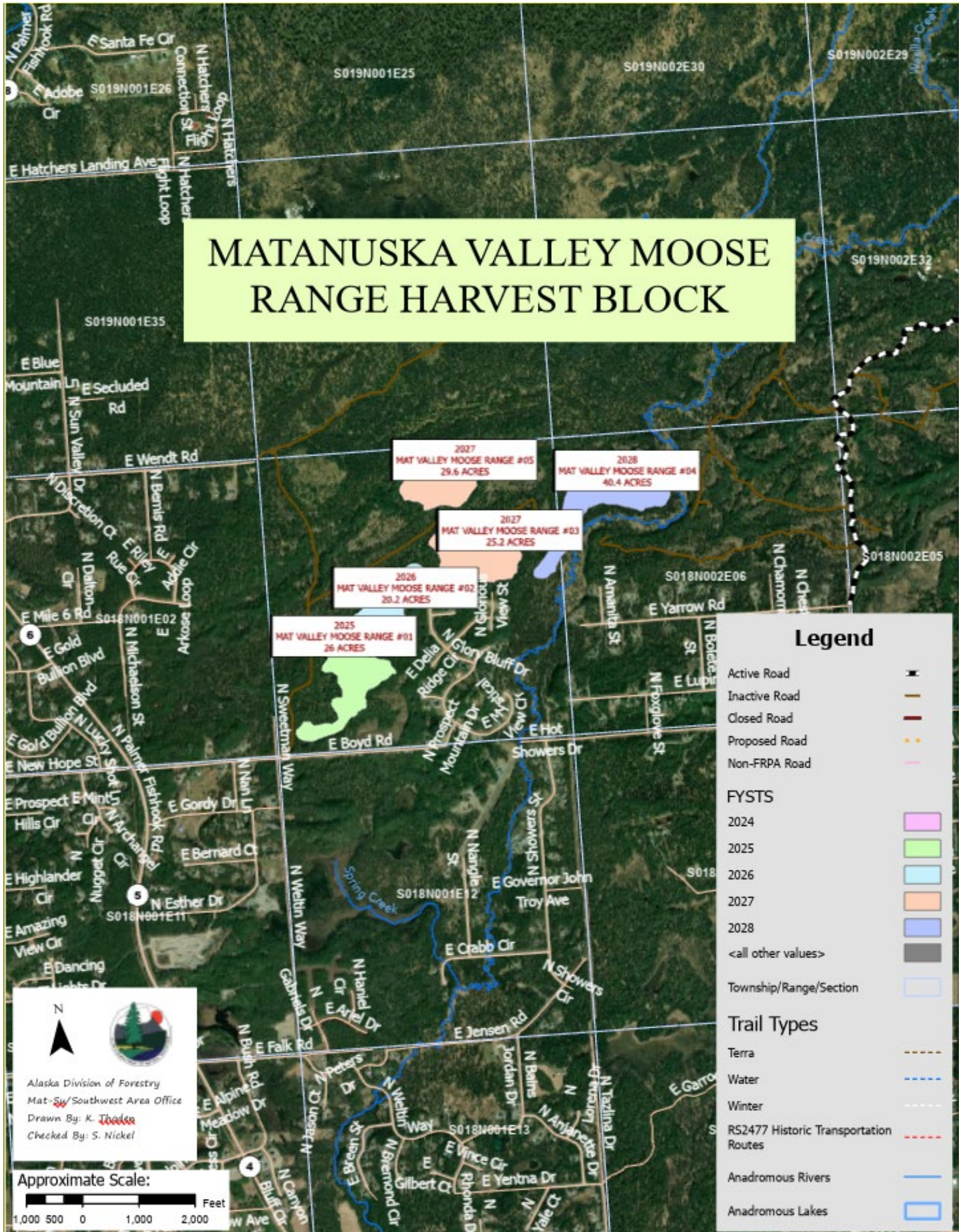


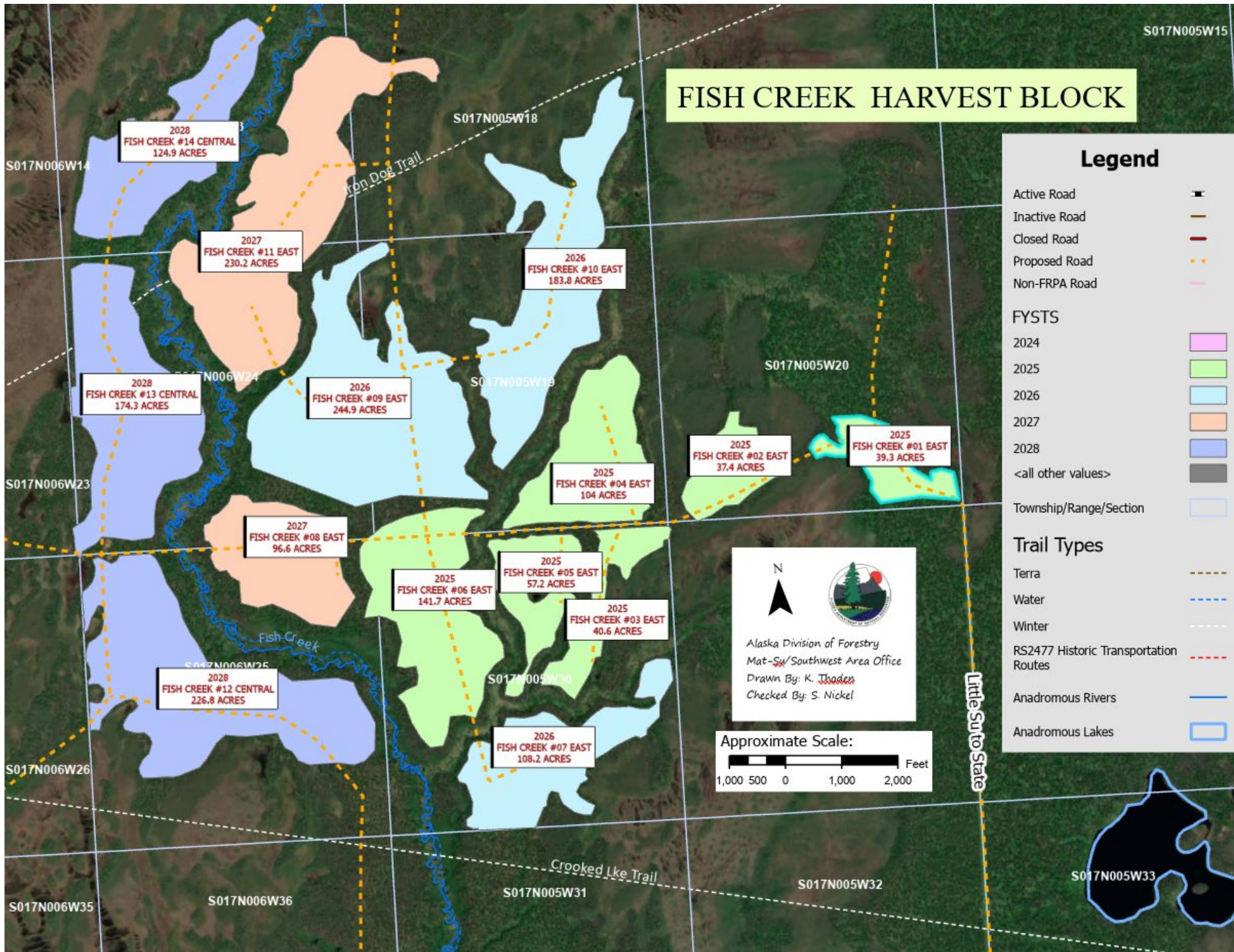

  
 Alaska Division of Forestry  
 Mat-Su/Southwest Area Office  
 Drawn By: K. Thoden  
 Checked By: S. Nickel





# MATANUSKA VALLEY MOOSE RANGE HARVEST BLOCK





PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

[End of Report]