



**SUBJECT:** AN ORDINANCE OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY APPROVING LAND CLASSIFICATION OF THREE BOROUGH-OWNED PROPERTIES IN THE BIG LAKE AREA AS RESERVED USE LANDS, RESOURCE MANAGEMENT LANDS AND GENERAL PURPOSE LANDS. (MSB008247)

**AGENDA OF: May 5, 2026**

<b>ASSEMBLY ACTION:</b>
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**AGENDA ACTION REQUESTED:** Introduce and set for public hearing.

<b>Route To</b>	<b>Signatures</b>
Originator	<div style="text-align: right;">4 / 21 / 2026</div> <p>X      L i s a   G r a y</p> <hr/> <small>Signed by: Lisa Gray</small>
Land & Resource Management Manager	<div style="text-align: center;"></div> <p>X      J o e   M e t z g e r</p> <hr/> <small>Signed by: Joe Metzger</small>
Emergency Services Director	<div style="text-align: right;">4 / 21 / 2026</div> <p>X      K e n   B a r k l e y</p> <hr/> <small>Signed by: Kenneth Barkley</small>
Community Development Department Director	<div style="text-align: center;"></div> <p>X      C h e y e n n e   H e i n d e l</p> <hr/> <small>Signed by: Cheyenne Heindel</small>
Finance Director	<p>X</p> <hr/>
Borough Attorney	<div style="text-align: right;">4 / 22 / 2026</div> <p>X      N i c h o l a s   S p i r o p o u l o s</p> <hr/> <small>Signed by: Nicholas Spiropoulos</small>
Borough Manager	<div style="text-align: right;">4 / 23 / 2026</div> <p>X      M i c h a e l   B r o w n</p> <hr/> <small>Signed by: Mike Brown</small>
Borough Clerk	<div style="text-align: right;">4 / 24 / 2026</div> <p>X      L o n n i e   M c K e ...</p> <hr/> <small>Signed by: Lonnie McKee</small>

- ATTACHMENT (S) :** Vicinity Map (1 pp)  
 Best Interest Findings (5 pp)  
 Public Comments (5 pp)  
 Planning Commission Resolution No. 26-06(2 pp)  
 Ordinance Serial No. 26-052 (3 pp)

**SUMMARY STATEMENT:**

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Emergency Services has identified a site for a future Emergency Services Facility in the Big Lake Area

located on S. Purinton Parkway. The Borough proposes to classify a five-acre portion of a forty-acre parcel as RESERVED USE LANDS - ESF (Emergency Services Facility) for a future water fill site and emergency helicopter landing zone. The remainder thirty-five acres is proposed to be classified as RESOURCE MANAGEMENT LANDS AND RESERVED USE LANDS for gravel extraction and then a future public safety building (Parcel A). Staff are also requesting the reclassification of two lots in the same area. Both lots are located on W. Susitna Parkway and are currently classified as RESERVE USE LANDS - ESF (Parcel B and Parcel C). It was determined by Emergency Services and Public Works that these lots would not be a good site for a future public safety facility. Land & Resource Management proposes classifying Parcel B and Parcel C as GENERAL PURPOSE for a future land sale. A Best Interest Finding, prepared with detailed information regarding each property, is attached.

Inter-department review was conducted, and public notice was completed in accordance with MSB 23.05.025. Three comments were received from the public noticing. Two of the commenters objected to a gravel extraction and one supported the gravel extraction with a stipulation. The comments are attached and included in the Best Interest Finding.

The Planning Commission adopted Resolution Serial No. 26-06 on April 20, 2026, recommending Assembly approval of land classification.

**RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:**

Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly approval of the land classification as set forth in the attached Best Interest Finding and Ordinance Serial No. 26-052.



**BEST INTEREST FINDING**  
**For the**  
**Classification and Disposition of Borough-owned Land**

**I. Summary of Proposed Action**

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Emergency Services has identified a site for a future Emergency Service Facility in the Big Lake Area located on Purinton Parkway. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) proposes to classify a five-acre portion of a forty-acre parcel as RESERVED USE LANDS – ESF (Emergency Services Facility) for a future water fill site and emergency helicopter landing zone. The remainder thirty-five acres is proposed to be classified as RESOURCE MANAGEMENT LANDS and RESERVED USE LANDS for gravel extraction and then a future public safety building (Parcel A). Staff are also requesting to reclassify two lots in the same area. Both lots are located on Susitna Parkway and are currently classified as RESERVED USE LANDS– ESF (Parcel B and Parcel C). It was determined by Emergency Service and Public Works that these lots would not be a good site for a future public safety building. Land & Resource Management proposes to classify Parcel B and Parcel C as GENERAL PURPOSE LANDS for a future land sale.

**II. Property Site Factors**

**A. Location:** The subject parcels are located on W. Susitna Parkway and S. Purinton Parkway in the Big Lake area.

**B. Legal Descriptions and Parcel Size:**

Parcel A: SW1/4 NW1/4, located within Section 3, Township 16 North, Range 4 West, Seward Meridian, Alaska, Palmer Recording District, Third Judicial District, State of Alaska as described in Notice of Forty-Acre Exemption recorded July 22, 2005, at serial number 2005-019194-0, containing 40 acres, more or less.

Parcel B: Lot 1, Block 1, Purinton Parkway Subdivision, according to plat 87-3, Palmer Recording District, Third Judicial District, State of Alaska, containing 7.8 acres more or less.

Parcel C: Lot 1, MSB Daniels Subdivision, according to plat 2022-4, Palmer Recording District, Third Judicial District, State of Alaska, containing 9.3 acres more or less.

**C. Land Status:** The subject properties were all acquired from the State of Alaska by patent.

Parcel A: Patent recorded July 26, 1974, in Book 85 at Page 638

Parcel B: Patent recorded September 16, 1981, in Book 243 at Page 993

Parcel C: Patent recorded July 26, 1974, in Book 85 at Page 638

**D. Restrictions:**

Land Classification

Parcel A is currently classified as Forest Management, Resolution Serial No. 94-090.

Parcel B is currently classified as Reserved Use - ESF (Emergency Services Facility) Ordinance 20-258.

Parcel C is currently classified as Reserved Use - ESF (Emergency Services Facility) Ordinance 06-081.

2. Land Use Plans

All the parcels fall within the Big Lake Comprehensive Plan Area. The plan encourages public lands to be managed to support the community land needs.

3. Title Restrictions

None. The lands were conveyed by the State of Alaska.

4. Covenants

None

5. Zoning

None

6. Easements & Other Reservations

Section line easements 50-feet in width attach to lands conveyed by the state.

Parcel A: Notice of Public Dedication recorded October 6, 1999, in Book 1038 at Page 128, for Purinton Parkway right-of-way.

Parcel B: Screening easement created on plat 87-3, along the west 15' and south 15'

Parcel C: Matanuska Electric Easement record a utility easement April 28, 2005, at serial number 2005-010305-0.

**E. Current Land Use:**

Parcel A: Timber Sales

Parcel B: Reserved for emergency services facility.

Parcel C: Reserved for emergency services facility.

**F. Surrounding Land Use:**

General Purpose, Residential, and Recreational.

**G. Existing Infrastructure:** Power is available for all parcels, Enstar gas is not available.

**H. Soils & Terrain:**

Parcel A: The largest portion of the property has Kichatna silt loam soils. There are also Kashwitna silt loam soils.

Parcel B: Most of the property has Kichatna silt loam soils.

Parcel C: This property has Kichatna silt loam soils.

**I. Resources:**

Parcel A: Most of the timber is white and black spruce with approximately one-third of the property with paper birch. Timber sales have been ongoing. Gravel reserves were identified in 2023 by RECON, with 50,000 cubic yards of class A fill.

Parcel B: unknown

Parcel C: unknown

**J. Assessment:** The 2026 tax appraised values are:

Parcel A \$110,600 Parcel B \$35,900 Parcel C \$48,100

**III. Public, Borough Department Comments & Recommendations**

In accordance with Title 23 and the Land Management Policy and Procedure Manual, landowners within 600 feet of the proposed property have been notified of the proposed land classification. Additionally, notices were published in the Frontiersman and posted on the Borough website. The Big Lake Chamber of Commerce, Parks, Recreation & Trails Advisory Board, and local Road Service Area and Fire Service Area boards were also asked to comment.

Public comments were received as results of the public notice. Father Randy Hillman supports the reclassification of Parcel A with the only stipulation that when and if gravel is removed, the area will be returned to grade and covered with soil. He agrees with the reclassification of Parcel B and Parcel C, see attached comments. Kurt Echols commented he is all for ESF, but objects to another gravel pit in the area, see attached comments. Janice Barrett, trustee of the Sis Molash Barrett Trust, objects to a gravel pit as it will affect her property value. She also noted MSB should wait for the West Susitna Access Rd. to be created and then sell Parcel A to raise money for the Borough. She noted this is a moose property and she has concerns regarding the reclamation after the gravel is extracted, see attached comments. Staff notes the gravel will be used for future road projects in the area and will be left as a level parcel for future development.

A Borough inter-departmental review was conducted, and comments were received from two divisions. The Department of Public Works, Pre-Design and Engineering Division requested Parcel B to have a 150' right-of-way easement reserved along Susitna Parkway and 50' right-of-way easement reserved along Purinton Parkway for future road improvements. This will provide for widening of both roads as well as the intersection enlargement. Specifically taking into consideration the deep hole and slope cuts that would be required on lots for highway widening. Staff notes when this property is sold the requested right-of-way easements will be reserved. Land & Resource Management staff commented that Big Lake Trail T13 (trail # 235 in the MSB Recreation Trails Plan) runs through Parcel A, and the trail will need to be relocated to preserve connectivity.

The Planning Commission approved Resolution 26-06 on April 20, 2026, recommending approval of an ordinance classifying three parcels in the Big Lake area.

#### IV. Analysis & Discussion

The proposed reclassification and disposition of the subject parcels are consistent with the land management policies, and the land classification criteria set forth in MSB Title 23.

Reclassifying a five-acre portion of Parcel A as Reserved Use Lands – Emergency Services Facility (ESF) supports the Borough’s long-term objective to strategically locate public safety infrastructure in growing service areas. MSB 23.05.100(B)(13) provides that Reserved Use Lands are intended for present or future public use, including facilities operated by governmental agencies. The proposed ESF classification aligns with this definition and ensures that land suitable for emergency response functions remains protected for that purpose.

The remaining thirty-five acres of Parcel A are proposed for classification as Resource Management Lands and Reserved Use Lands to allow for interim gravel extraction followed by future public safety facility or other public facilities. MSB 23.05.100(B)(16) supports this classification where lands contain surface resources of current or potential value and are appropriate for multiple-use management. The identification of approximately 50,000 cubic yards of Class A fill material supports the Resource Management designation, while planned reclamation and grading will preserve the parcel’s long-term suitability for public use. Staff has determined that gravel extraction will directly support future Borough road projects in the area and that the parcel will be reclaimed to a developable condition, consistent with public comments requesting restoration following extraction. Parcel A is also traversed by Big Lake Trail T13 (Trail #235). Consistent with the MSB Recreation Trails Plan and Borough policy supporting trail connectivity, the trail will be relocated as necessary to maintain continuous public access while allowing future emergency services development.

Parcels B and C are currently classified as Reserved Use Lands – ESF; however, it has been determined by the Department of Emergency Services and the Department of Public Works that these parcels are no longer suitable for a public safety facility. Parcel C is located within the five-mile Insurance Services Office (ISO) response radius of the existing Big Lake fire station, which limits its functional necessity for DES purposes. Parcel B presents infrastructure and roadway constraints that would require significant right-of-way dedication and site modification to accommodate future roadway widening and intersection improvements.

Reclassifying Parcels B and C as General Purpose Lands is consistent with MSB 23.05.100(B)(4), which provides that General Purpose Lands are appropriate where physical characteristics, location, or surrounding development support a variety of potential uses. This classification allows the Borough flexibility to dispose of the parcels through a public land sale, consistent with Borough land disposal policies and the efficient management of surplus property. Prior to disposal, staff will ensure that necessary public use easements, including future right-of-way reservations requested by Public Works, are retained to accommodate long-term transportation improvements.

Taken together, the proposed classifications balance the Borough’s need for future emergency services infrastructure, responsible resource management, and the orderly disposal of lands no longer needed for public purposes. The action promotes public safety, supports local infrastructure development, preserves recreational connectivity, and returns surplus property to productive private use. Staff finds that the proposal meets the Borough’s Best Interest standard

and is consistent with the authority granted under MSB 23.05.100(A) to classify Borough-owned land.

#### V. Final Administrative Decision

The Community Development Department, Land & Resource Management Division respectfully requests classification of a five-acre portion of Parcel A as RESERVED USE LANDS – ESF and the remainder thirty-five acres as RESOURCE MANAGEMENT LANDS and RESERVED USE LANDS as shown of the vicinity map. Staff requests Parcel B and Parcel C be classified as GENERAL PURPOSE LANDS for a future land sale.

MSB 23.05.100(B)(13) defines “Reserves Use Lands” are those lands which have been transferred, assigned, or designated for present or future public use, or for use by a government or quasi-government agency, or for future development of new town sites, or for future expansion of existing public uses.

MSB 23.05.100(B)(16) defines “Resource Management Lands” are land which, because of surface resources contained within the land or in connection with adjacent lands, are presently or potentially valuable for multiple-use management.

MSB 23.05.100(B)(4) defines “General Purpose Lands” are those lands which, because of physical features, adjacent development, location, or size of the area, may be suitable for a variety of uses, or which do not lend themselves to more limited classification under other land designations.

Authority: Classify land MSB 23.05.100(A)

**Lisa Gray**

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**From:** Sarah Thomas  
**Sent:** Friday, March 6, 2026 3:03 PM  
**To:** Lisa Gray  
**Subject:** Fw: Public Comment on NSB008247 Big Lake Land Reclassification for Sell

~Sarah Thomas  
Administrative Specialist  
Recreation & Library Services

Matanuska-Susitna Borough  
350 E Dahlia Ave  
Palmer, AK 99645  
(907) 861-7631

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**From:** Chaplain Randy Hillman <akrevran@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 6, 2026 2:58 PM  
**To:** Land Management <LMB@matsugov.us>  
**Cc:** Hugh Leslie <Hugh.Leslie@matsugov.us>; Bill Gamble <Bill.Gamble@matsugov.us>; Kevin McCabe - State Rep Dist 30 - Big Lake <Representative.Kevin.McCabe@akleg.gov>; George Rauscher - State Senator Dist O - Sutton <Senator.George.Rauscher@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Public Comment on NSB008247 Big Lake Land Reclassification for Sell

[EXTERNAL EMAIL - CAUTION: Do not open unexpected attachments or links.]

**TO:** Ms. Lisa Gray  
Mat-Su Land & Resource Mgmt. Agent  
**FR:** Father Randy Hillman  
MSB PRT At-Large #4

**Ms. Gray, I have reviewed the information you supplied in the mailer and looked at MSB's online property management for the parcels.**

**I can support the Reclassification of Parcel A (16N04W03B001) with the only stipulation that when and if Gravel is removed, the area will be returned to grade and covered with soil.**

**As a past board member of LEPC the Big Lake Area really needs larger EMS Facilities with parking, EMS Air-Evac, and extra above ground fuel storage, with meeting & CERT training room(s), etc.**

**Regarding Parcels B (3321B01L001) & C (8219000L001), I agree with the Reclassification so that the MS Borough can sell those parcels. I recommend it to be sold as residential property, without any Gravel extraction.**

**Blessings,  
Fr. Randy Hillman**

IM No. 26-085  
Ordinance Serial No. 25-052

**MSB PRT At-Large # 4**

**Cc: Hugh Leslie, MSB PRT  
Bill Gamble, Assembly Dist. 5  
Rep. Keven McCabe Dist. 30  
Senator George Rauscher**



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH  
 Community Development  
 Land & Resource Management Division  
 350 East Dahlia Avenue  
 Palmer, Alaska 99645

**RECEIVED**

**MAR 05 2026**

**Community Development**

18 2912B04L006  
 ECHOLS KURT  
 8440 MENTRA CT  
 ANCHORAGE AK 99518

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH  
**PUBLIC NOTICE**

**Type: Land Classification (MSB008247)**

**Tax ID: 16N04W03B001, 3321B01L001, 8219000L001**

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Land & Resource Management (MSB) is requesting the Planning Commission's recommendation on land classification and Assembly approval to sell two Borough-owned parcels and reserve one parcel for future emergency services facility and resource management. These three parcels are in the Big Lake area located on W. Susitna Parkway and S. Purinton Parkway. Department of Emergency Services (DES) proposes classifying a five-acre portion of a forty-acre parcel as RESERVED USE - ESF (Emergency Services Facility) for a future water fill site and emergency helicopter landing zone. The remainder thirty-five acres is proposed to be classified as RESOURCE MANAGEMENT LANDS and RESERVED USE LAND for a gravel extraction and then a future public safety building (Parcel A). Parcel B and Parcel C are currently classified as RESERVED USE - ESF. It was determined by DES and Public Works that these two lots are unsuitable for a future emergency services facility. MSB proposes classifying Parcel B and Parcel C as GENERAL PURPOSE for a future land sale.

Supporting material is available for public inspection by appointment only during normal business hours on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Borough Building in the Land & Resource Management office or visit the Public Notice Section on the Borough's web page, [www.matsu.gov](http://www.matsu.gov). Public comments are invited on this request. If you have any comments please mail or deliver them to the Borough offices at the address indicated above, no later than **March 31, 2026**. If you have questions about this request or would like to schedule an appointment to view supporting materials, call Lisa Gray at 907-861-7848 between 8 am - 5 pm or you can send an e-mail to: [LMB@matsu.gov](mailto:LMB@matsu.gov) (please refer to **MSB008247 Land Classification** when submitting comments).

Comments: I am all for the ESF, BUT we already have 3 Gravel PITS a stones throw from Kenaka subdivision I would hate to see another Gravel PIT in the area!

Kurt Echols

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

(If you need more space for comments please attach a separate sheet of paper.)  
 \*This public notice & request for comments is in compliance with MSB Code 23.05.025



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH  
 Community Development  
 Land & Resource Management Division  
 350 East Dahlia Avenue  
 Palmer, Alaska 99645

RECEIVED

MAR 31 2026

Community Development

61 16N04W02B005  
 SIS MOLASH BARRETT TRUST  
 14254 E OUTER SPRINGER LO  
 PALMER AK 99645

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH  
 PUBLIC NOTICE

Type: Land Classification (MSB008247)

Tax ID: 16N04W03B001, 3321B01L001, 8219000L001

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Land & Resource Management (MSB) is requesting the Planning Commission's recommendation on land classification and Assembly approval to sell two Borough-owned parcels and reserve one parcel for future emergency services facility and resource management. These three parcels are in the Big Lake area located on W. Susitna Parkway and S. Purinton Parkway. Department of Emergency Services (DES) proposes classifying a five-acre portion of a forty-acre parcel as RESERVED USE - ESF (Emergency Services Facility) for a future water fill site and emergency helicopter landing zone. The remainder thirty-five acres is proposed to be classified as RESOURCE MANAGEMENT LANDS and RESERVED USE LAND for a gravel extraction and then a future public safety building (Parcel A). Parcel B and Parcel C are currently classified as RESERVED USE - ESF. It was determined by DES and Public Works that these two lots are unsuitable for a future emergency services facility. MSB proposes classifying Parcel B and Parcel C as GENERAL PURPOSE for a future land sale.

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Comments:

*I don't want the gravel pit' My property abuts the PARCEL A and it will affect my property's value. I think the MSB should wait for the West Susitna Access Rd. to be "created" and then sell Parcel A to ~~MSB~~ raise \$ for the borough. This is moose property.*

*One thing that is constantly put forth is the phrase that the property will be flattened - not digging a hole - so that a fire station can be built some year in the future. This is not*

Signature:

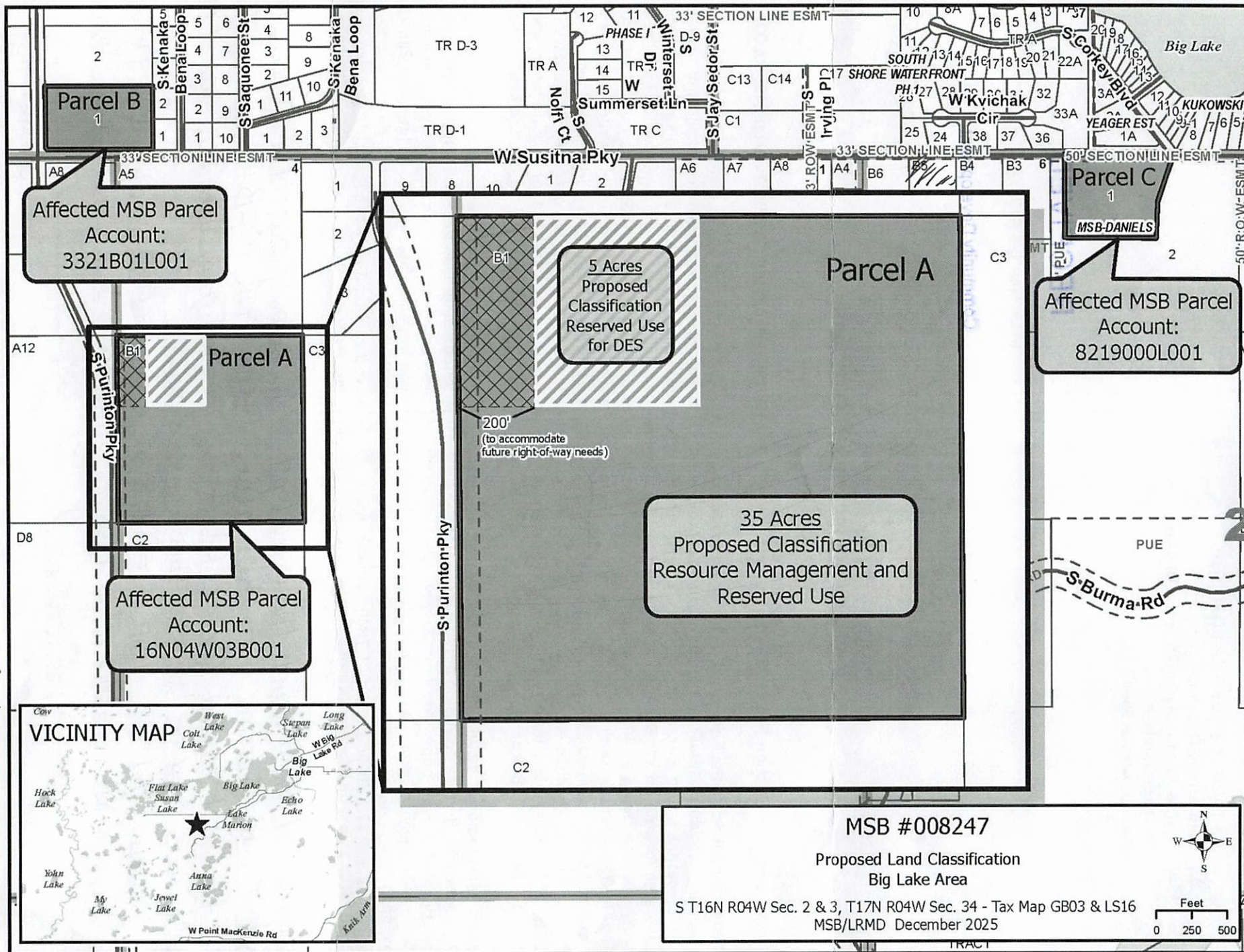
*Janice C. Barrett, Trustee*

(If you need more space for comments please attach a separate sheet of paper.)  
 \*This public notice & request for comments is in compliance with MSB Code 23.05.025

IM No. 26-085  
 Ordinance Serial No. 26-052

*a statement that has been upheld in the past. Give me an example of a gravel pit that exists today where.* →

The developer of it said they would return it to its original landscape.



Affected MSB Parcel Account: 3321B01L001

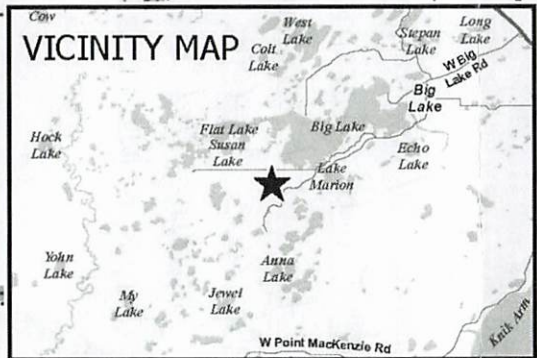
Affected MSB Parcel Account: 16N04W03B001

Affected MSB Parcel Account: 8219000L001

5 Acres Proposed Classification Reserved Use for DES

35 Acres Proposed Classification Resource Management and Reserved Use

200' (to accommodate future right-of-way needs)



**MSB #008247**  
 Proposed Land Classification  
 Big Lake Area  
 S T16N R04W Sec. 2 & 3, T17N R04W Sec. 34 - Tax Map GB03 & LS16  
 MSB/LRMD December 2025

Feet  
 0 250 500

By: L.Gray  
Public Hearing: April 20, 2026  
Action: Approved

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH  
PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 26-06**

A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDING APPROVAL OF AN ORDINANCE CLASSIFYING THREE PARCELS IN THE BIG LAKE AREA AS RESERVED USE LANDS, RESOURCE MANAGEMENT LANDS, AND GENERAL PURPOSE LANDS. (MSB008247)

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WHEREAS, the intent and rationale for this resolution are found in the accompanying Preliminary Best Interest Finding which also provides information specific to each parcel being classified; and


WHEREAS, a inter-departmental review was conducted, along with 30-day public notice in accordance with Title 23 and Land and Resource Management Policy and Procedures adopted by the Borough Assembly; and

WHEREAS, through land classification, the parcels identified for specific future purpose cannot be changed without Assembly approval.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning Commission hereby recommends Assembly approval of land classification of Parcel A (tax parcel 16N04W03B001) for a five acre portion as "Reserved Use Lands - (ESF)" and the remainder thirty-five acres as dual classification of "Resource Management

Lands" and "Reserved Use Lands" as identified on the vicinity map, and classification for Parcel B (tax parcel 3321B01L001) and Parcel C (tax parcel 8219000L001) as "General Purpose Lands" for a future land sale.

ADOPTED by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning Commission this 20th day of April, 2026.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Richard Allen, Chair

ATTEST

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
LACIE OLIVIERI, Planning Clerk

(SEAL)

YES: Glenn, Allen, Carpenter, Collins, McCabe, Fonov, Scoggin

NO: None