

WATER GUIDELINES

1. PRIORITY USES

- a. Except for public water supply and domestic use, the highest priority water use in the study area is for protection and maintenance of fish and wildlife habitat. DNR should not allow an appropriation of water to cause the instream flow or lake levels to fall below the amount determined necessary by ADF&G to protect or maintain fish and wildlife habitat, unless, under the procedures outlined in AS 46.15.080, the Commissioner of DNR makes a finding based on public review that the competing use for water is in the best public interest and no feasible and prudent alternative exists.
- b. The appropriation of water shall be allowed to fulfill the purposes of a grazing lease, forest practice, mining operation, or other activities as long as the appropriation of water does not adversely affect the ability of prior water right holders to obtain their water, meets the criteria for issuance of a permit in accordance with AS 46.15.080 and meets all of the requirements and guidelines in this plan established to protect fish and wildlife populations, habitat, recreation and related public uses.

2. RESERVATION PRIORITIES

- a. In accordance with applicable statutes, regulations and procedures, and as time and budget allow, management agencies shall give support to instream flow studies and reservations of water that are necessary to protect and promote resource values and uses identified in this plan for streams and other waterbodies.
- b. High priority streams for instream flow study and possible reservation include Deception Creek and Willow Creek. These have been identified because of their high public values for habitat and their potential recreation value and the potential competition for water between these uses and resource developments. If necessary, instream flow reservations applied for under AS 46.15.145 will be made on these priority rivers and streams. The portion of Willow Creek within the plan area is already covered by an instream flow reservation for fish habitat (LAS 11562).

3. WATER QUALITY

Water quality shall be maintained in the streams, stream segments, or water bodies occurring in the Deception Creek Management Unit. The Water Resources Section of Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys should establish annual water quality monitoring sites in key recreation, grazing and mining areas. In cases where water quality problems are identified, remedial action must immediately be taken by DEC. Of particular concern are potential impacts to recreational users, wildlife and/or fisheries as a result of discharge of sediment, turbid water, or toxic materials from mining areas and fecal contamination in grazing areas.