

The legislature has designated the river corridor as the Hatcher Pass Public Use Area (see Map 12 in original plan). To protect scenic, recreational, and fisheries values, it has been closed to mineral entry.

The valley is steep and mountainous with many unstable surficial geologic features, an active fault system and glaciers. The valley floor has some avalanche potential, and the rest of the area has high avalanche potential.

The lower valley has moderate value grass resources and has been leased for grazing for 25 years; however, it has not been grazed the past two years. Herd management is easy due to the natural boundaries provided by the mountains and the swift, rocky rivers.

C. MANAGEMENT INTENT

The overall Hatcher Pass management scheme is to provide a variety of dispersed, wilderness-type, recreational opportunities to a wide variety of users. This subunit is the only one where a quiet, backcountry experience is available from a road access point.

This unit will be managed primarily for low density, non-motorized use, and dispersed recreation, including hunting and trapping. Keeping options open for future lode mineral development of the valley walls has a high priority. Within Section "A", grazing is a high priority and will be managed so it is compatible with recreation.

D. PLANNED ACTIONS

1. MINING

A mineral closing order will be placed on the Little Susitna River headwaters lake to protect the public recreation and fisheries values. Most of the rest of the river has been closed to mineral entry by the legislature in SB 334 which created the Hatcher Pass Public Use Area (see Map 12 in original plan).

2. RECREATION

- a. **Non-Motorized Special Use Area.** Establish a nonmotorized (including aircraft landings) special use area in the portion of this subunit within the Hatcher Pass Public Use Area and its proposed additions. [WILL BE CLOSED TO MOTORIZED USE (INCLUDING AIRCRAFT LANDING) FOR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES IN BOTH WINTER AND SUMMER. PERMITS FOR MOTORIZED ACCESS WILL BE ISSUED TO THOSE WHO CAN DEMONSTRATE AN ECONOMIC INTEREST (OTHER THAN RECREATION) IN THIS VALLEY ON WHICH THEY ARE ECONOMICALLY DEPENDENT (E.G., A MINING CLAIM, GRAZING LEASE, OR TRAPLINE), OR FOR GROOMING OF A WINTER SKI TRAIL. NO PERMIT IS REQUIRED FOR EMERGENCY RESCUE. A PERMIT MAY

BE ISSUED IF THERE IS A FINDING THAT THE PROPOSED MOTORIZED USE WILL PROVIDE A CLEAR PUBLIC BENEFIT.] See Map 12 in original plan for boundaries.

- b. **Footbridge.** Replace the old footbridge over the Little Susitna with a safe one. The bridge may be built to also accommodate cattle access to rangeland west of the river.
- c. **Archangel Bridge.** DOT/PF has found the bridge over Archangel Creek on the Gold Mint Road to be unsafe for motorized use. Necessary repairs should be done to allow continued foot, horse, and cattle access, but it will be closed to vehicle use.
- d. **Public Use Cabin.** The existing cabin on Mint Glacier should be converted to a public use cabin. Agreements with recreational groups may be negotiated for its maintenance and provisions made for reserved use by the recreational group at certain times of the year.
- e. **Trails/Routes.** The following are routes which may be identified on a map and/or brushed out:
 - . Upper Little Susitna Trail, 8 miles (13 km)
 - . Mother Lode Lodge to Arkose Ridge, (3 km)
 - . Lonesome Mine/Arkose Ridge, 3 miles (5 km)
 - . Moose Creek overlook, 3 miles (5 km)
- e. **Additions to the Hatcher Pass Public Use Area.** The valley floor in Section 3 and Mint Glacier are proposed for inclusion in the legislatively-designated Hatcher Pass Public Use Area, due to high public recreation and fisheries values. This will provide the same protection and management status for the headwaters of the Little Susitna River as for the rest of the river within the management unit (except that Mint Glacier will remain open to mineral entry).

E. GUIDELINES

1. GRAZING

- a. **Vegetation Studies.** The existing grazing lease shall be used to establish baseline vegetation studies for range trend analysis, utilization trends, livestock forage preference, and other grazing related issues.
- b. **Lease Area Reduction.** Leasing should be continued; however, the lease area shall be reduced to the best grass producing area as identified by Soil Conservation Service (see Unit B on Map 6 on page 197 of original plan) upon expiration of the existing lease or prior to that time by concurrence of the lessee.
- c. **Recovery of Resource.** The area at the confluence of Archangel Creek and Little Susitna River will be fenced off to allow recovery and protection of this sensitive area.