

# TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESS

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## A. GOALS

1. Provide access to public lands for the purpose of maintaining, improving and enhancing fish and wildlife populations and their related recreational uses.
2. Continue public rights-of-way and access on historic trails in the Moose Range.
3. Minimize significant disturbance or damage to wildlife populations and wildlife habitats that could occur as a result of increased public use of the Range.

## B. MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

State agencies and the public require legal access into the Moose Range for the purpose of maintaining, improving and enhancing fish and wildlife populations, and perpetuating public multiple use of the area. The state will base access for resource development on existing road systems wherever possible, rather than develop additional roads until further field analysis determines the need for additional road construction. The state will use public land for access whenever possible. Inhabited private property will be avoided when a feasible alternate access exists. The primary developed access systems are Fishhook Road, Buffalo Mine Road, Permanente Road, Fish Lake Subdivision Road and the Chickaloon River Road. (See Maps 1 and 6, pages 11 and 39 for Access.) New access may be developed as a result of timber harvest/habitat enhancement efforts. Public use of these roads will be decided in the future through interagency review and approval. (See pages 125-127 of this chapter.)

The overall management approach for providing outdoor recreational opportunities is to allow non-developed, dispersed activities within the Range and not to actively encourage increased public use. The state will not aggressively develop or manage recreational use. Allowing the use of existing trails, establishing legal public access for motorized and non-motorized travelers and development of trailhead-parking facilities have the highest priority. No new recreational trail developments within the Moose Range are proposed with the exception of potential public recreational use of post timber harvest roads/trails or mining-access roads.

Public recreational use will be directed to trails used historically in the Range: the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail, the Chickaloon River Trail, the Old 98 Trail and the Boulder Creek Trail. Public recreational use of post mining roads between Buffalo and Premier Mine and Seventeen Mile Lake and along Permanente Road may also be allowed.

The state will assert public right-of-way on legal public access routes. The state will strive to educate the public as to legal access, and clarify private and public lands to reduce trespass, as funding allows. The state also encourages the Matanuska-Susitna Borough to provide public access to state and borough lands during the platting process whenever possible in areas where public access is blocked by private lands.

## C. GUIDELINES

### 1. GLENN HIGHWAY

- a. Scenic Views. Realignment and/or reconstruction of the Glenn Highway should be done in a manner that preserves the scenic views from the highway to the extent feasible. If necessary to accomplish this, needed development on state land may occur within the Moose Range rather than outside it (for example, power lines).
- b. Providing Access. The realignment of the Glenn Highway will provide for access to major roads, trails and recreational facilities within the Range. The access points will include:
  - (1) the Buffalo Mine Road;
  - (2) Jonesville Mine Road;
  - (3) Mile 58 Road;
  - (4) Permanente Road;
  - (5) the proposed Kings River campground;
  - (6) Chickaloon Branch Road (Chickaloon River Road).
- c. Avoiding Important Habitat. The realignment of the Glenn Highway should avoid important wildlife habitat and enhancement areas.
- d. Scenic Turnouts. The realignment of the Glenn Highway will include scenic turnouts. The location of these turnouts will be identified by DOT/PF during the reconstruction of the Glenn Highway. DOPOR will work with DOT/PF to identify turnouts with key scenic or recreational values. Management of the scenic turnouts will be negotiated between DOPOR and DOT/PF on a case-by-case basis during development of the realignment project. Potential scenic turnouts to be considered are shown on Map 6 on page 39.

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### 2. PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY ASSERTION

- a. Continuing Assessment. Assessment of public rights-of-way on roads and trails within the Moose Range will continue. The legal status of each trail within the Moose Range will be individually researched by DNR. (See Table 3 on page 52 and Map 6 on page 39.)
- b. Verification and Maintenance of Access. The state will verify and maintain public access on existing roads and trails throughout the Moose Range on the following roads and trails, whenever possible.

#### Roads

- (1) Fishhook Road
- (2) Buffalo Mine Road
- (3) Permanente Road
- (4) Fish Lake Subdivision Road
- (5) Chickaloon River Road

#### Trails

- (1) Post mining roads from Buffalo Mine Road to Seventeen Mile Lake and Sutton.
  - (2) Trail to Little Granite Creek bench.
  - (3) Permanente Road.
  - (4) The Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail.
  - (5) The Chickaloon River Trail.
  - (6) The Old 98 Trail.
  - (7) The Boulder Creek Trail.
- c. Procedures for Rights-of-Way Assertion. For all rights-of-way on roads and trails assessed by DLWM to be valid, and for which access is being restricted, denied or the state's position differs from the public, the following process is recommended for asserting validity:
    - (1) Open an ADL casefile to identify the exact problems, management options and recommended actions to be taken on each trail/road. Each casefile will include the following information:
      - (a) State status plat.
      - (b) BLM master title plats.
      - (c) Rectangular surveys and/or USGS 1:63,360 maps with the trail marked on them.
      - (d) Patents to third parties.
      - (e) Affidavits from users.
      - (f) Historical report.
      - (g) Other relevant information in chronological order.
      - (h) List of recommended actions - purchase of ROW, width of ROW; 17b easement, RS2477, etc.

- (2) Enter on LAS-Case type 581, Public Easement.
- (3) Send LAS-11 form to Division of Management for notation to status plats.
- (4) Obtain names and addresses of all current property owners along the trail from the Matanuska-Susitna Borough.
- (5) Send letter of notification to all private property owners.
- (6) The state will take legal action on public access blocked by private citizens.

### 3. TRAIL MANAGEMENT

- a. Parking. Trailhead parking facilities will be developed at Purinton Creek, Chickaloon River and Permanente Road in order to provide the public with access to trails used historically in the Moose Range.
- b. Signs. Signs will be posted only along major roads and trails where public access is desirable and in accordance with management needs. The Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina and Chickaloon River Trails will be marked by signs. Trail signs will help the public stay on the trail and not on private lands, thereby reducing trespass situations.
- c. Trail Buffers.
  - (1) Non-historic Trails. No standard minimum vegetated buffer is recommended for most trails since they are located in areas that will be used for multiple use purposes. This diversity of use will provide a variety of viewing opportunities. For example, a trail may transect a habitat enhancement area thus providing a greater opportunity to view and/or harvest wildlife.
  - (2) Historic Trails. The Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina, Chickaloon River and the Old 98 Trails are historically significant and shall have a minimum standard 100' vegetated buffer on each side of the existing trail center line. The buffer width may increase up to 300' maximum based on the summer line-of-sight requirement, which dictates that the buffer extends just beyond the point where the line-of-sight is blocked by standing summer vegetation. Artificial strengthening of the buffer through seedling transplants may be incorporated with the approval of ADF&G and DNR.

Activities allowed within these historic trail buffers include the following:

- (a) Disease and insect control and prevention with pesticides or selective tree cutting as approved by ADF&G, DNR, and DEC.

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- (b) Other recreational trails may cross these trails and their buffers.
- (c) Logging roads and utility lines may cross these trails and their buffers if no feasible and prudent alternative exists. Such crossings should be at a 90° or as close to that as possible.
- (d) Material sites solely for the purpose of maintaining the trail.
- (e) Habitat enhancement activities that involve the conversion of brush are allowed. Selective tree cutting of large trees (8" diameter or larger) is not allowed.

NOTE: See page 137 for a summary of all buffer requirements.

- d. Maintenance. Trails will be maintained as funds and volunteer support permit. Increased levels of recreational trail use and recreational use within enhancement areas could interfere with habitat enhancement efforts and wildlife use of the area. Therefore, existing trails will generally be maintained at current levels and will not be upgraded, so as not to encourage additional use.
  - (1) Trailwork will generally be done only in areas where over-use has detrimental effects on water quality, anadromous fish, or where over-use or natural occurrences make the trail impassable or result in severe erosion.
  - (2) The trailwork will be designed to return the trail to its original condition, not to widen or improve it. Clearing brush along trails to maintain the existing trailbed is allowed.
  - (3) Historic trails that are not currently passable may be restored for foot use. This includes the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail, the Chickaloon River Trail, and the Old 98 Trail.
  - (4) Trail improvement or trail construction may be used to direct people away from key wildlife areas.
- e. Volunteers. Agreements with volunteer groups for trail work are encouraged but will specify that the group has no exclusive rights to use.
- f. Trail Requirements. All recreation trails shall:
  - (1) Be open for public use.
  - (2) Be open to motorized uses.

- (3) Have established legal access along the route through private and public lands.
- (4) Provide parking at designated trailheads.
- (5) Be approved by DNR and ADF&G.

g. Recreational Trail Use Conflicts

- (1) Reasons for Restrictions. No restrictions on motorized or non-motorized recreational trail uses are proposed at this time. Future limitations on recreational use may be considered by DNR and ADF&G for the following reasons:
  - (a) Public Safety. To promote the safety of all users of public land and waters. Public safety can include consideration of hazardous situations, such as major trail/road wash-outs, where leaving the trail/road open to public use would endanger public lives.
  - (b) Wildlife Maintenance and Protection. To maintain and protect wildlife populations, wildlife enhancement efforts or critical habitat.
  - (c) Environmental Damage. To minimize the occurrence of unacceptable environmental damage to existing soils, trails, watersheds, vegetation, natural or cultural/historic values.
  - (d) User Conflicts. To minimize conflict between motorized and non-motorized recreationalists.
- (2) Procedures for Restrictions. When DNR and ADF&G agree that a conflict exists and needs to be resolved the following procedures will be followed:
  - (a) DNR and ADF&G Agreement. DNR and ADF&G will clearly identify the issues and problems involved and develop criteria necessary to determine the acceptable level of environmental degradation or disturbance, and the actions required to alleviate the problem.
  - (b) Public Involvement. The state will involve the public recreational user groups affected by the conflict in developing a resolution.

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(c) Resolution Options. Options for resolution to be considered include, but are not limited to, the following:

- \* seasonal use restrictions, such as vehicle access closures during periods of critical vegetation growth, calving season, or moose critical winter feeding periods;
- \* use of electric fencing around habitat research study plots to eliminate potential damage of the plot by recreationalists or grazing livestock;
- \* relocation or reclamation of a trail away from areas of conflict; solicit volunteer trail construction support from recreational users.
- \* closure of a specific trail or area to motorized vehicle use.

(d) Motorized Vehicle Closures.

\* Temporary Closures. Temporary closures may be necessary to prevent severe road deterioration or permanent damage to the roadbed during break-up or heavy rain seasons. Temporary closures require DNR and ADF&G approval. The state will notify the public of temporary closures in local newspapers. Temporary closures lasting longer than six weeks requires public review.

\* Permanent Closures. Any permanent closure requires public review, and comment, as well as DNR and ADF&G approval. (See the Fish, Wildlife and Forestry guidelines on page 74, Cle(7), for definition of public review and notice.)

## 4. ACCESS FOR MINING

- a. Mining Access in Restricted Areas. Permits may be granted for development of mining access in any future proposed non-motorized areas.
- b. Minimum Amount Necessary. Access roads for mining will be kept to the minimum necessary to perform mineral production operations.
- c. Pre-construction Approval. Proposed mining roads will be located on a topographical map and submitted for review as part of the plan of operations.
- d. Maintenance of Visual and Environmental Quality. Roads will be sited in such a manner as to minimize visual impacts and erosion.
- e. Interagency Analysis. An analysis of proposed mining roads will be performed by ADF&G and DNR (including DOPOR) and recommendations made for routing of the road in a manner which will enhance or have minimum impact on wildlife, fisheries and recreation values. A well-placed road, for example, could serve the miner and also provide motorized access for grazing, hunting and other recreational pursuits.

- f. Public Access. Mining access roads will serve as public access except when:
  - (1) A determination is made by DNR in cooperation with ADF&G that public use would negatively impact wildlife populations.
  - (2) Public access would create public safety or other management problems or adversely impact the mining operation.
- g. Future Closure. Where access roads are detrimental to management for wildlife or public recreation, they may be kept closed to the public and removed and rehabilitated when mineral production ends.
- h. Stream Crossings. Culverts and/or bridges will be used at all stream crossings and shall follow ADF&G standards for fish passage.

5. ACCESS FOR TIMBER HARVEST OPERATIONS AND WILDLIFE HABITAT ENHANCEMENT

- a. Upgrading Existing Roads/Trails. DOF will concentrate on using existing road/trail networks during timber harvest or habitat enhancement operation whenever possible. Upgrading of existing roads will take place when an analysis shows that upgrading existing road beds is less expensive than constructing new ones. Should new road construction be the least expensive and desirable, a new road will be constructed. All road construction plans will receive interagency review during the review of the DOF five-year timber harvest/habitat enhancement schedule.
- b. Level of Upgrading. Access roads/trails constructed in the Moose Range during timber harvest will be upgraded only to a level necessary to perform timber harvest/habitat enhancement work or other resource development. Public recreational use of these access roads developed by DOF will not be encouraged. Posting of trail signs or developing trailheads on these trails will be limited and only done where and when it is necessary to direct public use away from timber or enhancement efforts, or to direct the public to stay on public trails. Historic trails may be signed. New access routes will receive an interagency review during the review of the DOF five-year timber harvest/habitat enhancement schedules to determine future public use of trails/roads. Some logging roads may be closed to public use.
- c. Determination of Public Access. Roads/trails created through resource development efforts will receive interagency review to determine whether or not the road/trail should remain open to the public. The review shall consider effects of the new access on wildlife, habitat enhancement efforts, resource development efforts, availability of funding for maintenance, and the public desire to use the roads/trails for recreational purposes.

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- d. Road Requirements. Forest harvest or wildlife habitat enhancement roads or trails shall meet the following requirements:
- (1) Utilize winter road access wherever possible.
  - (2) Running surface - 12 foot minimum width.
  - (3) Pullouts - one each 1/4 mile.
  - (4) Ditching - required only when necessary to prevent severe erosion.
  - (5) Logging roads will be located and designed to allow the public to collect firewood, assist in habitat enhancement, and subsequently to accommodate recreational use where appropriate.
  - (6) At a minimum, the road should be usable by four-wheel drive vehicles.
- e. Road Buffers. Buffers of naturally occurring vegetation will be maintained along major roads such as the Glenn Highway, Permanente, Fish-Drill Lake, Buffalo Mine, Castle Mountain Mine and Chickaloon River Roads. These buffers shall be 100 feet wide measured from the outside edge of the right-of-way. However, entry to or exit from the timber harvest/habitat enhancement areas shall be allowed from the road beds. These entry/exit ways may be harvested and therefore should not be more than 100 feet wide nor should the minimum distance between the entry/exit way be closer than 0.25 mile along these roads. The standard 100 foot buffer may be modified based on the line-of-sight requirements as necessary to provide for restricted views through these buffers.

Activities allowed in road buffers are include the following:

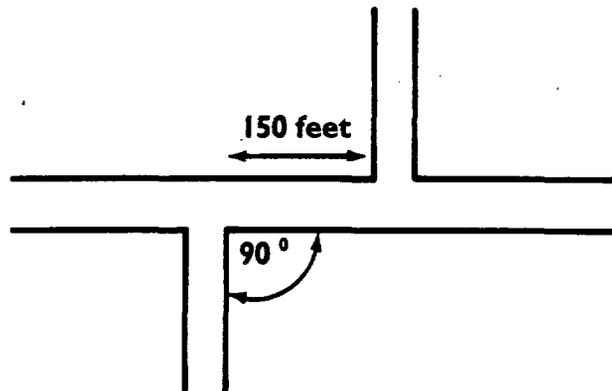
- (1) Selective-tree cutting as approved by ADF&G (Habitat Div.) and DNR.
- (2) Disease and insect control and prevention with pesticides as approved by ADF&G, DNR, and DEC.
- (3) Grazing as approved by ADF&G and DNR and consistent with the grazing guidelines in this chapter, on pages 103-117.
- (4) Roads, trails and utility lines may cross the buffer and should be as close to a 90° angle as possible.
- (5) Powerlines may be located within the buffer if the purpose is to screen them from the road and sufficient vegetation exists in the right-of-way and buffer to accomplish this.

- (6) Recreational trails (e.g. for snowmobiles or 3-wheelers) may be located within the buffer if there is no room for them in the right-of-way and putting them in the buffer does not significantly reduce its screening capability.

Note: See buffer summary on page 137 for all buffer requirements.

- f. Spur Road Access. When personal use firewood cutting occurs along a trail, DOF will build spur side trails through the buffer to access the timber rather than allow cutting of buffers.
- g. Off-set Crossing of Logging Roads. Logging roads or trails shall cross existing trails at a 90° angle or as close to that as possible. On those portions of the Chickaloon River and the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trails on which there is vehicular use. Such crossings shall be offset at least 150 feet. (See Figure below.)

Figure 5: OFFSET CROSSING OF LOGGING ROADS



- h. Cutting Permits. Personal firewood cutting permits shall specify that no cutting is allowed within the buffer.

Note: See page 137 for a summary of all buffer requirements.

6. RIGHT-OF-WAY POLICY FOR STATE ROADS

- a. Development Within. Any development within the DOT/PF road rights-of-way will require the prior approval of DOT/PF. The DOT/PF

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rights-of-way include the following state roads within or adjacent to the Moose Range:

- (1) Glenn Highway
- (2) Chickaloon Branch Road (Chickaloon River Road)
- (3) Buffalo Mine Road
- (4) Mile 58 Road
- (5) Jonesville Mine Road

- b. Preserve Natural Vegetation. DOT/PF is encouraged to preserve the natural vegetation in the right-of-way to the extent feasible and prudent.

### 7. PUBLIC WATERS

DNR and ADF&G will work cooperatively to ensure access to public lands and waters wherever possible.

### 8. SECTION LINE EASEMENTS

Use of section lines for access routes within the range will be discouraged in favor of other routes based on topography, gradient and road standards. Use of section lines for access routes to the Range again should be secondary to other routes based on good management practices in locating roads and trails. Section line easements may be used, however, if other routes are unavailable.

### 9. PUBLIC EDUCATION

DNR and ADF&G will work to clarify private and public land ownership as well as resolve clear public legal access within the Moose Range to help alleviate trespass on private land.

### 10. NEW ACCESS

- a. Upper Moose Creek Restriction. No new trails or roads shall be built beyond or north of the natural knob at Sec. 1, T19N, R2E, S.M. on Moose Creek (see Chapter Four, page 168, C8d(1)).
- b. Arkose Bench Restriction. The Arkose Bench Trail shall not be reconsidered until after 1991 (see Chapter Four, page 168, C8d(3)).
- c. Upper Granite Creek Restriction. No new trails or roads shall be built into the Upper Granite Creek drainage, north of Sec. 36, T20N, R3E (see Chapter Four, page 184, C8c).