

THE EASTERN MANAGEMENT SUBUNIT

A. BACKGROUND

The Eastern Management Subunit includes the portion of the Moose Range that lies east of R5E, S.M. and includes most of the Chickaloon River drainage and a portion of the Boulder Creek drainage. The area has high-to-moderate values for fish and wildlife. Moose, small game, furbearers, black bear, Dall sheep and resident fish are harvested by residents from Anchorage, Palmer, Sutton and Chickaloon. Subsistence and sport harvest effort both occur, but cannot be readily separated or distinguished. Wildlife viewing occurs in road or trail accessible areas of the subunit. Unlike the Western or Middle Management Subunits, this subunit has low-to-moderate timber values along the lower Chickaloon River and lower Boulder Creek. Moose habitat will be enhanced in this subunit to offset critical habitat being lost to development elsewhere in the Matanuska Valley.

The Eastern Management Subunit has moderate coal values, located near Anthracite Ridge.

Public lands in this subunit have moderate-to-high values for dispersed outdoor recreation. Most use occurs along the existing Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail, the Chickaloon River Trail and the Boulder Creek Trail and on the Chickaloon River. The Chickaloon River provides a highly valued remote wilderness Class II, III and IV whitewater boating opportunity in southcentral Alaska. The predominant scenic value in the Eastern Management Subunit is Puddingstone Hill. This feature is viewed most frequently from the existing trails within the subunit.

There are limited grazing resources in this subunit. The grass resources here are located in small pockets. A preference right to a grazing lease in upper Boulder Creek may exist based on an earlier federal government lease.

B. MANAGEMENT INTENT

The management emphasis in the Eastern Management Subunit is to maintain, improve and enhance fish and wildlife populations and moose habitat, using habitat enhancement techniques. The state will utilize the results from projects conducted in the southwest corner of the Western Management Subunit or other related studies to enhance moose habitat in the Eastern Management Subunit.

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Forested lands in this subunit will be managed to provide personal use firewood to meet the local demand on a sustained yield basis. Timber harvest activities will be limited, due to the limited supply of timber available in the subunit.

Nearly all of the entire Eastern Subunit will be available for exploration and development of leasable minerals and will remain open to leasable and locatable mineral entry, except for a mineral closure around one mineral lick in the upper Chickaloon River. However, no new leasing is planned at this time.

Dispersed outdoor recreational activities will continue in the Eastern Management Subunit. The state will verify and assert public rights-of-way on the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina and Chickaloon River Trail to guarantee continued public use of these popular trails. The scenic views of Puddingstone Hill from the Chickaloon River, Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina and Boulder Creek Trails should be given consideration during any surface or subsurface development.

C. GUIDELINES

1. FISH, WILDLIFE AND FORESTRY

- a. Resource Management. This subunit will be managed primarily to maintain, protect, and if necessary, enhance the following fish and wildlife resources and habitats:

Moose, throughout the subunit.

Brown and black bear and moose throughout the subunit.

Caribou in the middle and upper Chickaloon and Boulder Creek drainages.

Dall sheep habitat throughout the subunit and lambing in the Puddingstone Hill area.

Wolves in the middle and upper reaches of the drainages.

Chum salmon, grayling, rainbow trout and Dolly Varden in Chickaloon River.

Dolly Varden and grayling in the Boulder Creek drainage.

Riparian habitats and instream flow along Chickaloon River and Boulder Creek.

And other species and habitats identified by ADF&G.

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- b. Fish and Wildlife Utilization. The subunit will be managed to allow continuation of the following activities:

Hunting of big and small game and trapping throughout the subunit.
Sportfishing for anadromous and resident stocked fish.
Wildlife viewing throughout the subunit.

- c. Timber Harvest and Habitat Enhancement

(1) Enhancement Considerations: The Eastern Management Subunit has small pockets of moderate timber value along the Chickaloon River, below 2,200 feet. The majority of the subunit has limited timber potential (see Map 10 on page 199). In the subunit, because of its poorer soil types, limited vegetation, and poor access, the management emphasis will be on maintenance of wildlife habitat rather than active timber management. It has been determined that habitat enhancement is desirable for this area. The state will apply the most appropriate techniques available, based on research findings from the test sites located in the southwest corner of the Range and other related studies. Any active habitat enhancement requires DNR and ADF&G approval.

(2) Future Timber Sales. No timber harvest/habitat enhancement is planned in this subunit prior to 1992. Any proposed sales will be included in the five-year timber harvest/habitat enhancement schedule and will be subject to interagency review prior to a final decision. There is currently one research pilot project proposed in the Eastern Management Subunit. Pilot Project Reference Code: MR-B-04-89 (proposed burn project); location: Sec. 10, 11, 12, T20N, R6E, S.M. Additional research pilot projects may be identified and submitted to ADF&G and DNR for approval. See Table 7 on page 190.

- d. Fisheries. ADF&G will maintain, protect and enhance the fisheries in the Chickaloon River, Boulder Creek and other waters. To accomplish this, ADF&G will assess and update available biologic, hydrologic and water quality information, establish stream priorities and develop appropriate recommendations for field investigations and/or Board of Fisheries consideration, as time and funds allow.

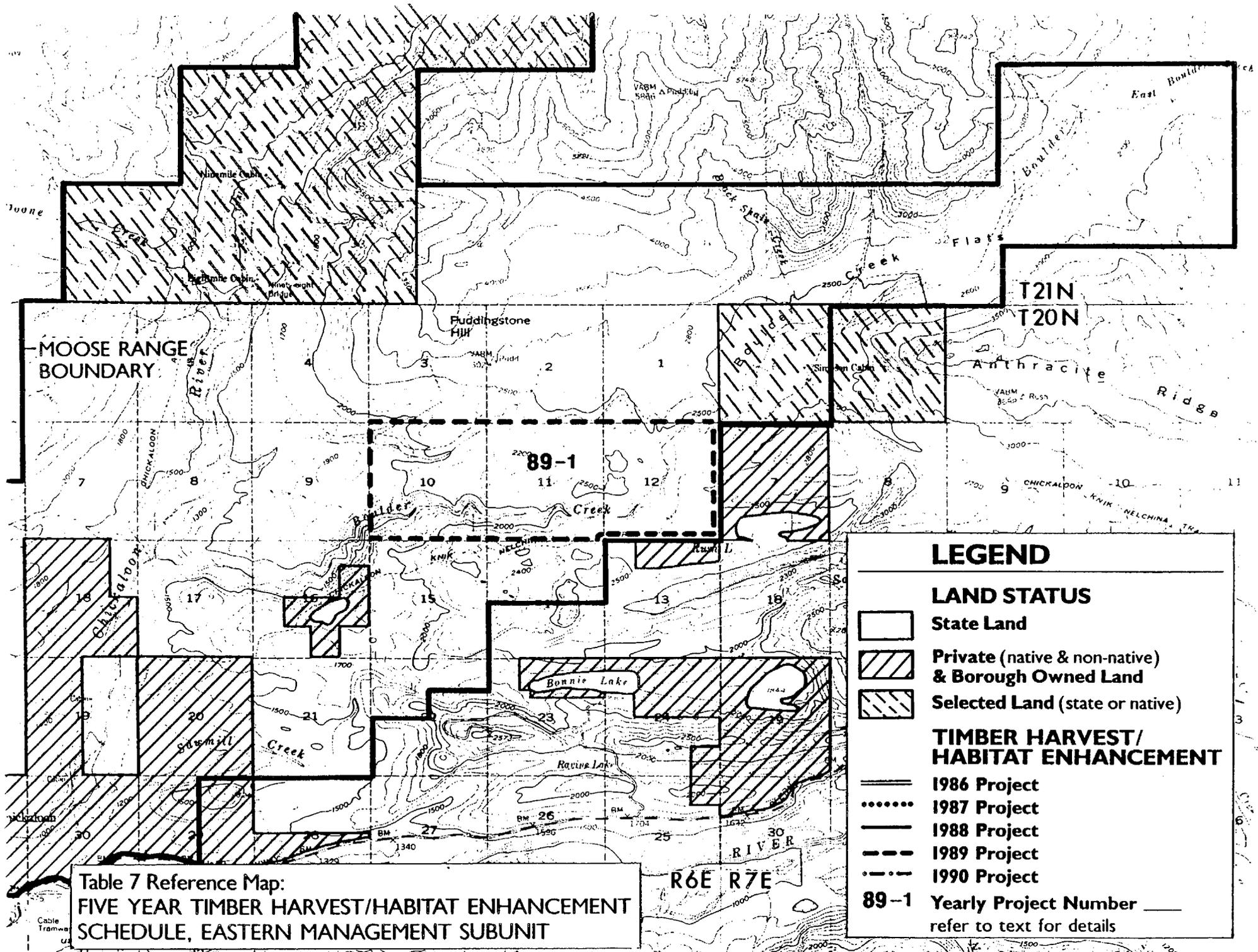


Table 7 Reference Map:
FIVE YEAR TIMBER HARVEST/HABITAT ENHANCEMENT SCHEDULE, EASTERN MANAGEMENT SUBUNIT

LEGEND

LAND STATUS

-  State Land
-  Private (native & non-native) & Borough Owned Land
-  Selected Land (state or native)

TIMBER HARVEST/HABITAT ENHANCEMENT

-  1986 Project
-  1987 Project
-  1988 Project
-  1989 Project
-  1990 Project
- 89-1** Yearly Project Number refer to text for details

2. SUBSURFACE

a. Locatable and Leasable Mineral Entry

- (1) Coal. The Eastern Management Subunit contains limited pockets of moderate to high potential coal resources, which would be difficult and expensive to develop. The plan does not preclude development of this coal for the long-term; however, near-term development is not recommended.
- (2) Other Minerals. The Eastern Management Subunit is open to locatable and leasable mineral development, except for the mineral lick area (see 2b, below). The state will remove the existing Mineral Closing Order No. 97, within Sec. 4, 6 and 10, T10N, R6E, S.M. from the Eastern Management Subunit to allow for future mining. This area was originally closed to mineral entry to avoid conflict with the then-proposed Chickaloon Bench land disposal. These lands are mental health lands and therefore, will still be closed to locatable mineral entry for the present. The purpose for removing Mineral Closing Order 97 is to ensure that these lands become available for mineral entry in the future on the same basis as other mental health lands.

b. Mineral Licks. An area with an approximate radius of 1/2 mile around the mineral lick in this subunit will be closed to locatable mineral entry for one year (see Maps 3 and 10, pages 23 and 199 and Chapter Three, Subsurface guideline 3.d., pages 84-86). There is an existing mineral leasehold location order (#2) on the licks in Sec. 10-15, and S1/2, Sec. 1-3 and N1/2, Sec. 22-24, T21N, R6E, S.M. Following permanent mineral closure on the lick, the leasehold location order on the balance of the nine sections covered by the leasehold location order will be lifted. (This change constitutes an amendment to the Susitna Area Plan.)

c. User Conflicts. The DOM will evaluate the existing mining location in Sec. 27 and 28, T21N, R7E, S.M. to determine whether existing surface uses are consistent with regulations, and whether or not a conflict is present between the miner and recreationists, as funding allows.

3. RECREATION

a. Picnicking, Camping and Trailhead Facilities

(1) Long Lake Recreation Site. DOPOR will pursue funding to upgrade and expand the Long Lake State Recreation Site facility (refer to Map 10 on page 199). This facility is outside the Moose Range boundaries. The expansion will focus on providing overnight camping facilities and developing day-use picnicking areas.

(a) Interpretive Displays. Site design will provide for information displays that interpret multiple use management,

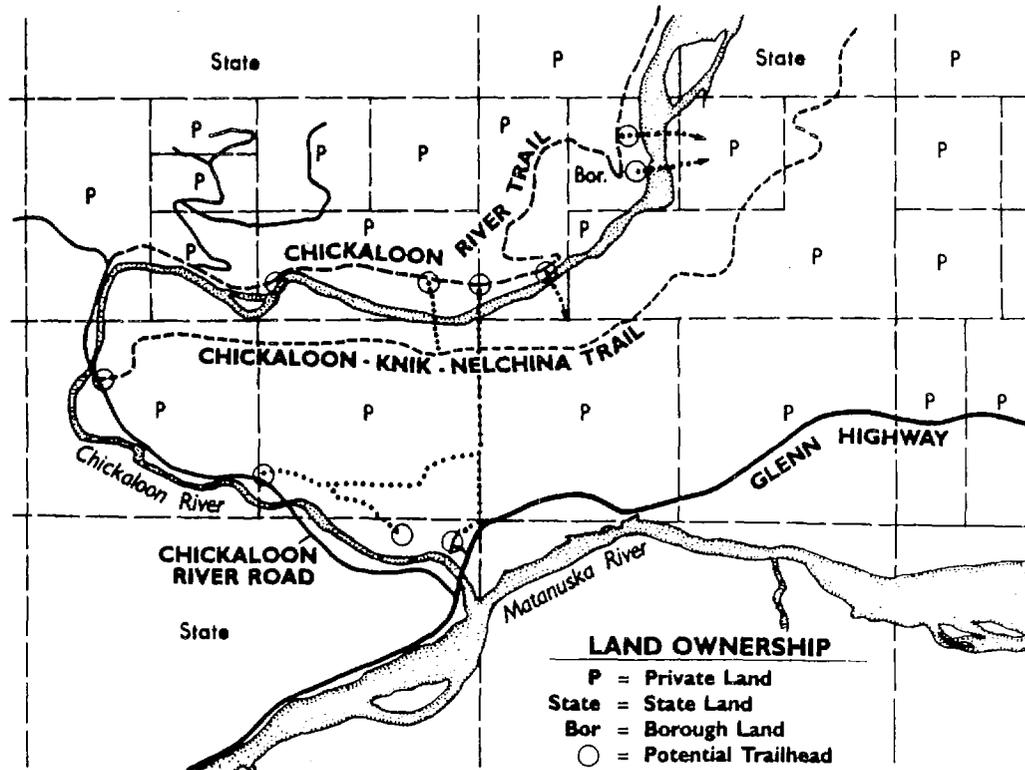
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and give information on legal public access, unique geological features and recreational opportunities available in the Range near the facility. ADF&G will co-author the interpretive displays.

(b) Long Lake Management Authority. DLWM will issue an interagency land management assignment to DOPOR for management of land adjacent to the existing Long Lake State Recreation Site. The exact size needed will be determined after a site analysis, but will be less than 640 acres.

(2) Trailhead Facility. Once public right-of-way on the Chickaloon River Trail, the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail and to the Chickaloon River is verified, a public trailhead facility will need to be developed. The best location for this trailhead is in the Middle Management Subunit on private property, but possible alternate locations for trailheads are in the Eastern Management Subunit. To utilize trailhead locations in the Eastern Management Subunit, a right-of-way would have to be asserted through private property on the Chickaloon River Trail based on the federal law AS 2477. All other possible trailhead locations are on private land. A possible location for a trailhead for the Chickaloon River Trail is on Matanuska-Susitna Borough land in Sec. 30, T20N, R6E, S.M. See Figure 6 below.

Figure 6: POTENTIAL TRAIL ACCESS IN THE CHICKALOON AREA



- (3) Purinton Creek. One of the key access points to the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina trail is at Purinton Creek. The Purinton Creek Trail access to the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail crosses private land. The owner of this land may be interested in developing a private campground. The state encourages such development, and DNR will work with the landowner to ensure that public access to the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail is preserved. In the event that it is determined that this route is not a legal access, and the landowner and DNR are unable to agree on the existence and location of public access, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough is encouraged to provide alternate access across its land east of Purinton Creek; DNR (DOPOR) and the borough will negotiate the necessary acres of land (within the W1/2 of Sec. 24, T20N, R7E, S.M.) to be dedicated for public recreation. DNR should work with the borough to develop and maintain a trailhead parking lot here. DNR and/or borough management of the facility will be determined prior to construction.

c. Public Use Cabins.

- (1) Public Position. Due to the total lack of public support for public use cabins, the state will not propose any public use cabins within the Moose Range. The public's major concern was with the state's inability to maintain and manage a public use cabin system. The public also felt camping to be the appropriate method for overnight stays in the Range.
- (2) Future Reconsideration. In the future, if the state does adequately fund a public use cabin program, and funding is available to operate and maintain public use cabins within the Moose Range, public use cabins may be reconsidered. Public review of any future proposals is required.
- (3) Potential Locations. The Eastern Management Subunit is the highest priority area in the Range for the development of a system of public-use cabins. If funding becomes available for public-use cabins, they may be considered at the following locations within this subunit: 1) on the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail near Sawmill Gorge; 2) on the Old 98 Trail on the Chickaloon Bench (at the formerly proposed land disposal site); 3) along the lower Boulder Creek trail; and 4) along the Chickaloon River Trail. (NOTE: These sites are on what was formerly mental health lands. (See explanation in Chapter One, pages 3-4.) Before public-use cabins could be established on any of these sites, notice would have to go to the plaintiffs and intervenor in Weiss v. Alaska.

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- d. Scenic Values. The spectacular views of Castle Mountain from the Glenn Highway and Castle Mountain and Puddingstone Hill from the Chickaloon River Trail and Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail systems should be conserved. The impact of various activities in the management subunit on these scenic resources will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis as timber harvest and habitat enhancement efforts are evaluated through interagency review. The intent is to minimize visual impacts from these activities on the scenic features, as viewed from the Glenn Highway and the trails (see Map 10 on page 199). Habitat enhancement may be allowed in order to maintain fish and wildlife species if determined to be necessary for a particular population.

4. HERITAGE RESOURCES

a. Known Sites.

- (1) There is one known heritage site on the Alaska Heritage Resources Survey Record in the Eastern Management Subunit (see Map 7 on page 43). This site will be managed according to the guidelines in Chapter Three on page 93.

- (2) National Register of Historic Places. DQPOR may also pursue funding to review and propose the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina trail and the Chickaloon River trail for the National Register of Historic Places.

- #### b. Undiscovered Sites. It is likely that there are other cultural resources in the vicinity of the Old Chickaloon townsite and along the Chickaloon River Trail, the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail and the Old 98 Trail. Trails up the Boulder Creek drainage may also have high heritage resource values. Areas in the Eastern Management Subunit designated by DQPOR as known high potential areas for containing heritage resources will be surveyed for heritage values as funding and staffing allows (see Map 7 on page 43).

5. BUFFERS

- #### a. Lakeshores and Stream Corridors. Habitat enhancement efforts in riparian zones along the Chickaloon River and Boulder Creek will take place according to Chapter Three guidelines on buffers (see Lakeshores and Stream Corridors Section, pages 97-100).

- #### b. Wetland Buffers. A buffer will be maintained around the wetlands in the area of Simpson's cabin on the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail as described in the Chapter Three Wetland buffer guidelines (see pages 101-102).

6. INSTREAM FLOW RESERVATIONS

ADF&G will establish instream flow needs on the Chickaloon River and Boulder Creek to maintain fish and wildlife resources, riparian habitat and associated recreational opportunities. The DLWM will work closely with ADF&G to establish the instream flow reservations.

7. GRAZING

a. Existing Leases. If the old federal grazing lease in Boulder Creek is converted to a state lease and a renewal is subsequently requested, SCS should analyze the suitability of the area for grazing prior to DNR issuing a renewal or a new lease or permit.

b. Future Leases

(1) Long Term Leases. New, long-term grazing leases will not be issued in the Eastern Management Subunit. The small pockets of grass resources that exist can best be utilized by recreationists on horseback.

(2) Permits. Seasonal permits for use by horsepackers may be considered on an annual basis if an analysis of the grazing potential in the upper Chickaloon and Boulder drainages is performed by SCS, and the studies show that the grazing potential is adequate to maintain the requested permit. DNR and ADF&G approval is required prior to issuing a permit.

8. ACCESS

a. Public Use of Existing Access. Public access into the Eastern Management Subunit is from the Glenn Highway and Chickaloon River Road through a network of trail systems. The public has traditionally used these trails to reach public land for outdoor recreational and commercial purposes. The state will verify and assert public rights-of-way where possible. Trails requiring verification and potential assertion include portions of the Chickaloon River Trail, the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail, the Old 98 Trail and the Boulder Creek Trail. DNR will also verify legal public access to the Chickaloon River.

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b. Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina, Chickaloon River, Old 98, and Boulder Creek Trails

- (1) Uses. Existing motorized and non-motorized use will continue on the Chickaloon River Trail, Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail, the Old 98 Trail and the Boulder Creek Trail.
- (2) Physical Maintenance. The Chickaloon River Trail, Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail, Old 98 Trail and Boulder Creek Trail will be maintained at their existing functional level, but will not be substantially upgraded or improved. Only routine maintenance of these trails is permitted except that trailwork to restore foot access on the first three trails is allowed if necessary.
- (3) Access on Native Allotment. The DNR will coordinate with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to attempt to secure public access on the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail, Old 98 Trail and Boulder Creek Trail across the native allotment application AA 7240 in N1/2SE1/4, S1/2NE1/4, Sec. 6, T19N, R7E, S.M. Public access through the allotment is essential to management of public lands in the Eastern Management Subunit.
- (4) Access on ANCSA Lands. The DNR will coordinate with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to guarantee public access on native selected lands when the native party receives title to the land. Sec. 5 & 6, T20N, R7E, S.M. are selected by the Chickaloon Moose Creek Village Corporation as part of their ANCSA settlement lands. The Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail, Old 98 Trail and Boulder Creek Trail intersect and pass through these sections. These trails provide vital links to the public lands in the Eastern Subunit of the Moose Range.

9. MATERIALS

Potential sources. In the floodplain of the Chickaloon River in the E1/2 of Sec. 19, T20N, R6E, S.M., there is a 160 acre potential materials site. This site should be utilized only for trail maintenance or construction. If gravel is taken here, the potential for fishery enhancement in conjunction with the extraction should be considered (see Chapter Three, Materials guidelines, Clb, on page 129).

D. LAND USE DESIGNATIONS SUMMARY

SURFACE

Primary Uses and Classification. Wildlife habitat, public recreation.

Secondary Uses. Heritage resources, forest.

SUBSURFACE

Locatable Minerals. Open, except for an approximate 1/2 mile closure around the mineral lick in the upper Chickaloon River drainage.

Leasable Minerals. Available for leasing. No new leasing likely in near future.

PROHIBITED SURFACE USE. Land disposals, remote cabins (private).

MENTAL HEALTH LANDS. 10,560 acres patented.
