

## RECREATION

---

### GOALS

The Turnagain Arm Management Plan will encourage providing access to state land for a wide variety of public uses, such as camping, berry picking, hunting, hiking, and fishing. The plan will support economic development in tourism by allowing use of state land for commercial recreation leasing. The plan will also provide opportunities for other recreational activities, such as backcountry hiking and cross country skiing.



Winner Creek Trail bridge

## MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

### a. Commercial Recreational Facilities on State Land

Lodges, tent camps, or other private facilities designed as private recreational facilities will be permitted or leased where allowed by this plan, and where:

- (1) Commercial recreation development adds to or enhances available recreation opportunities.
- (2) The commercial facility and the use it generates will minimize significant negative impacts on the amount and quality of existing uses, including fish and wildlife harvest. It is recognized that a quantitative determination of the effects of the proposed facility will rarely, if ever, be possible, but an assessment of the impacts should use available information from DNR, ADF&G, or other appropriate sources.
- (3) The facility will be sited, designed, constructed, and operated in a manner that minimizes conflict with natural values and traditional uses of the area.
- (4) The facility will be sited and designed in accordance with the other guidelines in this plan.

### b. Recreational Mining

Recreational mining is not a subsurface use under State Mining Law. A party proposing to conduct recreational mining on state land on a commercial basis must procure a permit or lease from the Division of Land. Location of a mining claim is not necessary to conduct recreational mining activities. However, if the location proposed by the applicant is on a claim and the applicant is not the claimholder, an agreement with the claimholder must be reached prior to receiving a lease from the Division of Land. The lease or permit will require concurrence by the Division of Mining & Water Management prior to issuance by the Division of Land to ensure that the surface use involves a minimal conflict with the subsurface. If the area applied for is not subject to a mining claim or lease, the Division of Mining and Water Management will review as on other proposed surface applications. Holding a mining claim does not give that locator a preference right for a surface lease or permit.

### c. Aircraft Operations

Before any helicopter skiing, or other aircraft activity that requires authorization from DNR to operate will be approved, measures to address and minimize noise and other impacts must be developed. Examples of such measures are location, flight routes, flight altitudes, times of operation, and other limits on operations. The operator must complete an aircraft operations plan that explains what measures will be taken to minimize these impacts. This aircraft operations plan must be approved by DNR before aircraft operations for commercial recreation purposes are allowed.

### d. Commercial Snowcat/Helicopter Skiing

- (1) The operator must have an operations plan, as outlined in **Guideline e** below, describing the commercial activity in detail.
- (2) If trail clearing is necessary, vegetation removal and terrain modification will be kept to a minimum. Measures will be taken to minimize erosion. The operator will show, to DNR's satisfaction, that the operator's trail use will minimize conflicts with other trail users.
- (3) Only one operator will be permitted to use a delineated permit area.
- (4) Because the permit area will remain open to the general public, use of explosives or other avalanche control methods is discouraged. Under certain conditions, and if specifically approved by DNR, explosives may be used. Procedures for avalanche control and for the use of explosives must be included in the Operations and Safety Plan, as stated in **Guideline e (7)-(9)** below.
- (5) The delineated permit area, including any cleared trails, will remain open to general public use. The operator must consider the safety of the general public that may be affected by the operator's activities. For safety reasons, the operator may close an area to the general public, if specifically approved by DNR. The operator must first document the danger involved with the area remaining open to general public use. (AS 38.05.850 & 11 AAC 96.040)
- (6) The operator will require that all clients wear appropriate avalanche beacons while engaged in the commercial activity.
- (7) DNR will consult with ADF&G during planning and authorization of commercial snowcat or helicopter skiing operations.

## e. Operations and Safety Plan

An operations and safety plan will be required for winter commercial operations such as fly-in skiing, snowcat skiing, guided backcountry skiing/mountaineering, and ski area development. (The commercial operator will make responsible, consistent efforts to comply with provision of the Operations and Safety Plan, to determine the extent of safety hazards and take steps to reduce these hazards.) The operations and safety plan will include, but is not necessarily limited to:

- (1) Outline of the Operator's Company Organization. This outline will include internal job responsibilities and external support groups or personnel.
- (2) Avalanche Hazard Evaluation and Forecasting. The operator will identify the runs to be used, the degree of hazard, and method of accumulating data on avalanche conditions. It is recommended that the operator use an expert with several seasons of paid, full-time experience in one or more of these areas: hazard evaluation, mitigation and control, forecasting with snow specialist background.
- (3) Daily Operating Outline. This outline must include the following: how the operation will proceed in low, moderate, and high avalanche hazard periods; go/no-go procedure; client orientation (rescue procedures, use of beacons, snowcat/helicopter safety, skiing procedure-ie. group control); and terrain evaluation (written description of ski runs including names or identifying numbers, characteristics of each run, ground cover, elevation, gradient and avalanche history). This information should be depicted on a detailed topographic map, aerial photo or comparable illustration. The daily operating outline should also include a description of how the daily snow safety analysis is conducted.
- (4) Mobilization plan in case of accident or avalanche.
- (5) Radio and dispatch ability, including a communication plan for transferring information from base station to guides and snowcat/helicopter pilot.
- (6) Contacts with weather service and qualified personnel checks for weather and snow conditions during operations.
- (7) Identification of mitigation methods such as periodic closure of operations, structural control, explosive control, or other appropriate measures.
- (8) Safety procedures for avalanche control, including specific methods to protect the operator's staff, clients, and general public from control methods and resulting avalanches. Procedures should include methods to ensure avalanche starting zones, paths, and runout zones are free of personnel during control activities.
- (9) Safety and operational procedures for handling explosives, and statement of qualifications for all personnel involved in the use of explosives.

- (10) Guides(s) or ski safety patrollers at a minimum should have emergency trauma training as well as knowledge and training of avalanche safety precautions and rescue techniques. The qualifications of the guides and their training must be documented and submitted with permit application.
- (11) Emergency procedures including the location and type of supplies. These procedures should address contingency plans for skiing accidents, avalanches and snowcat or helicopter accidents. Supplies should include provisions for rescues, first aid, and client comfort. Key personnel should be trained in the use of these supplies.
- (12) Need for and location of any on-site improvements such as snow depth markers, reference poles, temporary shelters, trail routes, helispot markings, etc.
- (13) Permits and approvals already secured or to be obtained from other agencies or land managers.

### f. Public Use Cabins

DNR will only build and manage public use cabins if there are adequate funds available to construct cabins or upgrade trespass cabins, as well as maintain and operate the facilities. Agreements may be made with recreational or other service groups for construction, maintenance, and operation of public cabins.

Existing unauthorized cabins in these areas may be evaluated by the Division of Land for possible conversion to public-use cabins.

On-site analysis by DNR, in consultation with ADF&G, will be required prior to construction or conversion of a public use cabin. If a cabin becomes difficult to manage, DNR may remove it.

Cabins above timberline will be sited to minimize visual impacts and damage to alpine vegetation.