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STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

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## Lake Louise State Recreation Area closed due to misuse

**(Palmer, AK)** – The Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation Mat Su Region has indefinitely closed the Lake Louise State Recreation Area in the Copper Valley near Glennallen effective immediately, in the face of continuing vandalism and lack of care by campers and recreators.

The division placed the facility into “passive management” earlier this summer, after the campground hosts intending to work there could not fulfil their duties, and the COVID-19 pandemic made it difficult to secure alternative hosts, said Stuart Leidner, superintendent of state parks in the Matanuska-Susitna valleys and Copper River Basin.

“We had truly hoped that Alaskans who traveled to the Lake Louise campground would work together to keep their camping sites cleaned up while respecting the local community,” he said. “Regrettably, this was not the case, and so we have decided we must close this area to all use, effective immediately.”

Lake Louise-area residents had pitched in last week to clean up trash left by earlier campers, but the Fourth of July weekend saw the problems only get worse, and even extend to local, non-park properties, he said.

“The community can no longer tolerate the lack of respect for their area displayed by visitors to their home community and surrounding areas,” Leidner said. “It’s an unfortunate circumstance and a difficult decision, but the health of Alaskans, respect for local residents, and our responsibility for this public resource made it necessary.”

The division will take steps to prevent vehicle traffic from entering the campground, which will remain closed until further notice. Division managers encourage campers to visit any of the other state campgrounds that do have campground hosts or staff, and to do their part to keep campgrounds clean while respecting nearby communities.

For current state campground status, visit: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/asp/open.htm>

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