

Navigable Rivers, Streams, Creeks, and Lakes

Management Intent of Navigable Waterbodies

Background

The intent of the plan is to designate and provide management intent for the shorelands under all navigable waterbodies. There are so many navigable rivers and lakes in the planning area that it is not practical to state the management intent for each individual waterbody. Therefore, the plan identifies general management intent and designations for most of the waterbodies within the planning area. In some cases, however, specific designations are identified for a particular waterbody because of the size, uniqueness, or particular values and functions of a river or lake.

The term “shorelands” is defined as land belonging to the state which is covered by non-tidal water that is navigable under the laws of the United States up to the ordinary high-water mark as modified by accretion, erosion, or reliction (AS 38.05.965(23)). See Figure 1-1 at the beginning of Chapter 1 for a diagram that illustrates the differences between shorelands, submerged lands, and uplands.

Shorelands are not identified on the plan designation maps. Identification of all such waterbodies is impractical on maps of the scale used in this plan. *The DNR records on navigability and hydrology must be consulted in order to determine whether a specific stream or lake is likely to be navigable.* These records are available in the Public Access Assertion and Defense unit in the Division of Mining, Land and Water in Anchorage. For further information on the state’s navigability policy, go to: <https://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/paad/nav/policy/>

Public Trust Doctrine

The Public Trust Doctrine provides that public trust lands, waters, and living natural resources in a state are held by the state in trust for the benefit of all the people and establishes the right of the public to fully utilize the public trust lands, waters, and resources for a wide variety of public uses. See the Public Trust Doctrine in Appendix E for more information.

Management Intent: Specific Rivers, Streams, Creeks, and Lakes¹

Some navigable rivers and lakes are given specific use designations because of their importance for recreation, water resources, harvest, and habitat. These are listed in Tables 3-1 and 3-2. Anadromous streams and lakes are designated Habitat and those rivers and lakes that are particularly significant for public recreation are designated Public Recreation-Dispersed. In those instances where the stream or lake is important for both purposes, these are co-designated Habitat and Public Recreation-Dispersed. Some streams are also designated Harvest because they must be protected to sustain subsistence culture. If a listed river is bounded by a unit, the unit identifier is noted.

Streams that are neither anadromous nor significant for public recreation acquire the designation of the management unit² they cross. Since there may be numerous parcels that may have differing designations, these streams may have different designations on various segments. Consult the plan maps to determine the appropriate designation(s).

Management Intent: Other Rivers, Streams, Creeks, and Lakes

The following designations apply to the navigable rivers and lakes *not* specified in Tables 3-1 and 3-2:

Navigable Rivers and Lakes within LDAs.

Anadromous streams within LDAs are co-designated Public Recreation-Dispersed and Habitat. Streams that are not anadromous are designated Public Recreation-Dispersed.

Navigable Waters (Rivers and Lakes) within Federal Conservation Units.

Navigable waters within Federal Conservation Units (National Parks, National Preserve, National Wildlife Refuge, etc.) that are anadromous are co-designated Habitat and Public Recreation. Navigable waterbodies that are not anadromous are designated Public Recreation.

All other Navigable Rivers and Lakes

The designation and management intent for navigable waterbodies that cross or are surrounded by state land are the same as those of the upland tract, except those portions of navigable waters that are anadromous are designated Habitat.

¹ Management of all rivers and lakes are subject to AS 38.05.126 as defined in AS 38.05.965(14) and AS 38.05.965(21). Refer to the Glossary in Appendix A for the definition of streams.

² This assumes that the uplands are owned by the state.

Navigable rivers and lakes that are not within general state land or LDAs are designated General Use and are to be managed consistent with the Public Trust Doctrine.

Table 3-1: Navigable Rivers, Streams, and Creeks

Rivers, Streams, and Creeks	Designation(s)
Beaver Creek – Interior Highlands Region (Unit I-30)	Ha, Wr, Rd
Beaver Creek – Yukon Flats Region (Unit Y-15)	Ha, Hr
Bettles River	Ha, Rd
Bonanza Creek	Ha, Rd
Charley River	Ha, Rd
Christian River	Ha, Rd
Coleen River	Ha, Rd
Crooked Creek	Ha, Rd
Dall River	Ha, Rd
Draanjik (Black) River (Unit Y-14)	Ha, Hr
East Fork Teedriinjik (Chandalar) River	Ha, Rd
Fish Creek	Ha, Rd
Grass River	Rd
Grayling Fork Black River	Ha, Rd
Hodzana River	Ha, Rd
Ikhèenjik River (Birch Creek) – Interior Highlands Region (Unit I-29)	Ha, Wr, Rd
Ikhèenjik River (Birch Creek) – Yukon Flats Region (Unit Y-13)	Ha, Hr, Rd
Kandik River (Charley Creek)	Ha, Rd
Middle Fork Koyukuk River	Ha, Rd
Nation River	Ha, Rd
Nome Creek	Ha, Rd
Porcupine River	Ha, Rd
Preacher Creek	Ha, Rd
Ray River	Ha, Rd
Salmon Fork Black River	Ha, Rd
Sheenjik River	Ha, Rd
South Fork Koyukuk River	Ha, Rd
Sucker River	Rd
Tatonduk River	Ha, Rd
Teedriinjik (Chandalar) River – Arctic Region (A-20)	Ha, Hr, Rd
Teedriinjik (Chandalar) River – Yukon Flats Region (Y-16)	Ha, Hr
Yukon River – Interior Highlands Region (Unit I-28)	Ha, Wr, Rd
Yukon River – Yukon Flats Region (Unit Y-12)	Ha, Hr, Rd

Table 3-2: Navigable Lakes

Navigable Lakes	Designation
Chloya Lake	Rd
Chandalar Lake	Rd
Twin Island Lake	Rd
Bob Johnson Lake	Rd
South Fork Lake	Rd
Twin Lakes	Rd