

# **Knik River Public Use Area Management Plan**



Adopted September 2008  
Modified September 2012



Alaska Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Mining, Land and Water  
Resource Assessment and Development Section

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# STATE OF ALASKA

## DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

### OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

SARAH PALIN, GOVERNOR

- ☐ 400 WILLOUGHBY AVENUE  
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801-1796  
PHONE: (907) 465-2400  
FAX: (907) 465-3886
- ☐ 550 WEST 7<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE, SUITE 1400  
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501-3650  
PHONE: (907) 269-8431  
FAX: (907) 269-8918

The Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources adopts the Knik River Public Use Area Management Plan (Management Plan) as the basis for the management of state land and water within the Public Use Area (AS 41.23.230) under the authority AS 41.23.190, and for those state lands that are included within the plan boundary but not within the boundary established by AS 41.34.230. In addition, I hereby also adopt this Management Plan as the Land Use Plan for the Public Use Area under the authority of AS 38.04.065 and 11 AAC 55.010-55.030. The Management Plan supersedes the Susitna Area Plan and the Prince William Sound Area Plan for the area covered by the Management Plan. The Department of Natural Resources will manage state land and water within the plan boundary consistent with the Management Plan under the authorities of AS 38.04.065 and AS 41.23.190, and will classify these lands consistent with the Management Plan.



Commissioner  
Department of Natural Resources

Date

Sept. 25, 2008

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# **Chapter 1: Introduction and Background**

## **Summary of Purpose**

The Knik River Public Use Area Management Plan (Plan) describes how the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will manage state lands for the 20 year life of the plan within the Knik River Public Use Area (PUA). The plan also provides specific guidance for the management of different uses in the PUA, particularly recreation. Since access within the PUA is such an important issue, the plan includes guidance on the management of present and future trails. It also outlines a process for addressing trail issues in the future in a more comprehensive manner. The plan also makes recommendations for facilities such as boat launches, parking areas and campsites. Regulations that apply to the PUA have been adopted and are included in Appendix C. The plan also proposes additional regulations that, if promulgated, will provide additional tools for managing the area. Once signed by the Commissioner, the plan becomes the policy and basis for decision making by DNR.

## **The Planning Area**

The planning area includes the legal boundary established by statute for the PUA in addition to four parcels of land adjacent to the PUA. One of these parcels is owned by the state, while the remaining three are owned by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB), the Mental Health Trust (MHT), and a private individual. See Map 1-1, page 1 - 3 for a depiction of the Plan boundary. A special use area designation has been adopted for the state-owned land in Township 41 North, Range 3 East, Seward Meridian, Section 31, W ½. Regulations at 11 AAC 96.016(c) apply to this land. The SUA designation will only apply to lands owned by the state.

## **The Public Use Area**

The PUA is located approximately 40 miles north and east of Anchorage on the western edge of the Chugach Mountains. The communities of Butte, Palmer, and Wasilla are located within 15 miles of the PUA. The planning area is mostly situated in the MSB and partially in the Municipality of Anchorage and the unorganized Valdez-Cordova Borough. It encompasses the drainages of Jim Creek, Metal and Friday creeks, a portion of Hunter Creek, and the main channel of the Knik River. The terminus of the Knik Glacier is also within the area and is a popular destination point for visitors to the upper Knik River valley. Another prominent feature and destination is the extensive lakes and wetlands located in the western portion of the PUA. The area is accessed by numerous trails, a few roads and the Knik River and associated shorelands.



The PUA consists of approximately 269,305 acres of primarily state-owned lands east of the City of Palmer. Other land ownerships within the PUA include federal, private, Native corporation, and MHT lands. Approximate acreages of land ownership are provided in the table below. See Map 1-2, *General Land Status*, page 1 - 5 for a graphic depiction of land status in and adjacent to the planning boundary.

**Table 1-1: Land Ownership within the PUA**

<b>Ownership</b>	State of Alaska	Federal	Native Corporation	Private	Mental Health Trust
<b>Acreage (approximate)</b>	208,261	58,145	962	1,489	448

Federal lands within the PUA have been selected by Eklutna Inc. consistent with the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971. The State has also selected these lands consistent with provisions of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980. Although adjudication of these selections by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has not been completed, it's likely that these lands will be conveyed to Eklutna Inc. rather than the state.

Management recommendations and policies developed through the plan will apply to state lands within the boundary of the PUA and the SUA. The plan does not apply to federal, Native corporation or other private lands.

## Why the Plan Was Developed

Situated within an hour's drive of almost 50 percent of Alaska's population, the Knik River valley has received increasing use as the populations of Anchorage and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough grow. Users are attracted to this area because of its fish and wildlife populations as well as the diversity of recreational opportunities. With this increasing use, there is a growing concern about public safety, impacts to fish, wildlife and their habitat and other natural resources and conflicts between users. Rapidly changing land status in the area has also raised concerns about the continued availability of access to public lands.

Unlawful uses have been increasing in the PUA. Underage drinking, indiscriminate shooting of firearms, destruction of private and public property, dumping large quantities of trash, and destruction of automobiles (and other structures) are a few of the unlawful activities occurring within the PUA regularly.

Unlawful activities are creating adverse impacts on the resources and uses within the Area. Wrecked and burned vehicles discharge petroleum and other hazardous chemicals onto the ground and into waterbodies. Off highway vehicle (OHV) use within anadromous waterbodies is occurring where that use is not authorized under state law. Multiple trespass



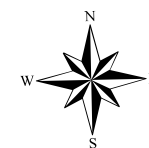
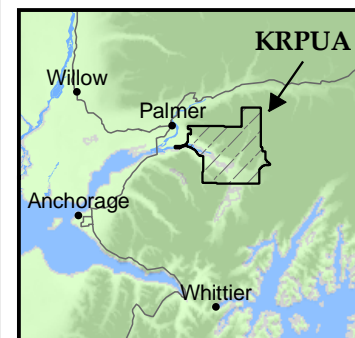
# Knik River Public Use Area

(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

## Planning Area

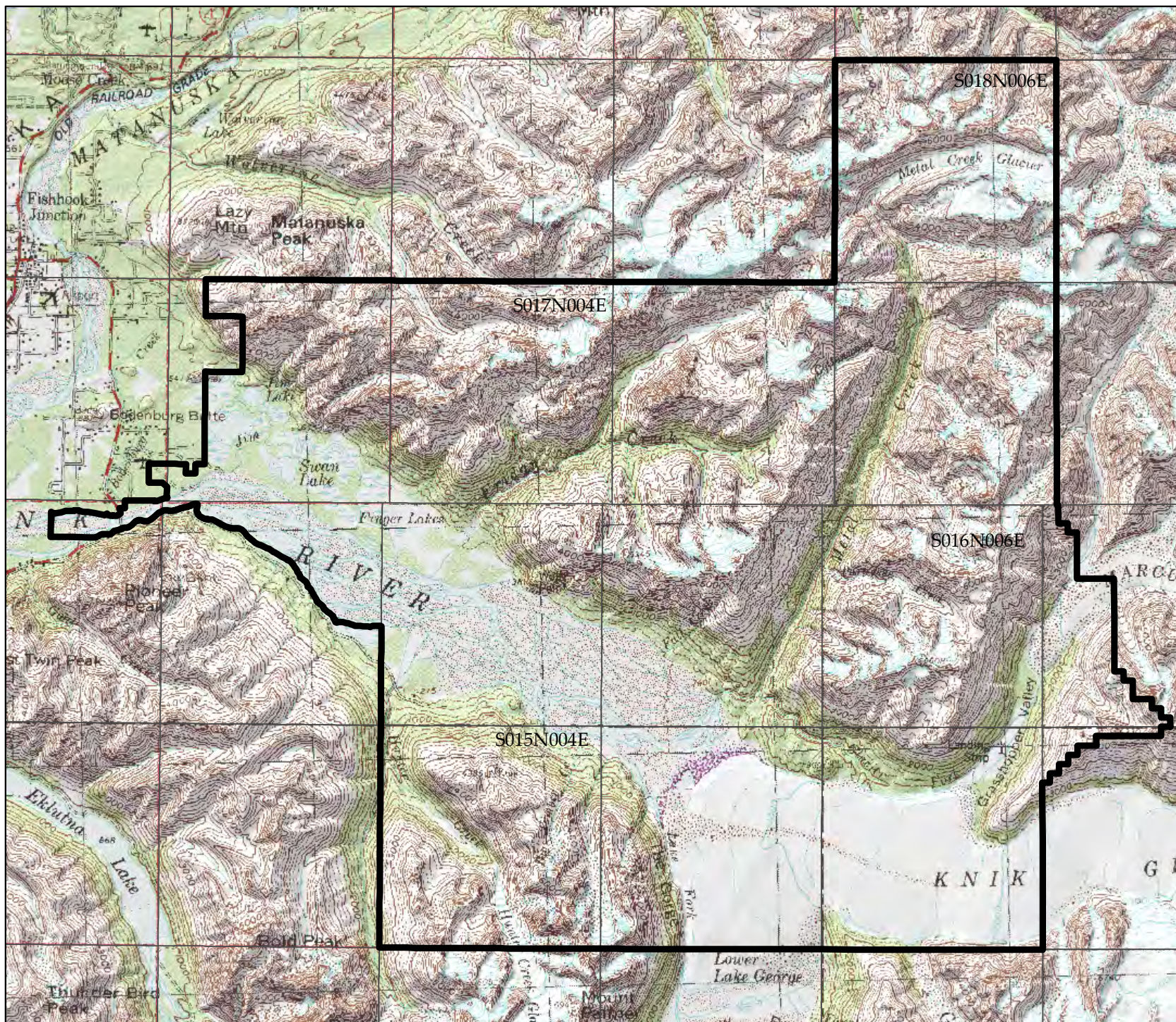
 KRPUA Planning Boundary

### Locality Map: Southcentral Alaska



This map is for graphic representation only  
and is intended to be used only as a guide.  
Source documents remain the official record.

Coordinate System: NAD\_1983\_UTM\_Zone\_6N















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# Knik River Public Use Area

(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

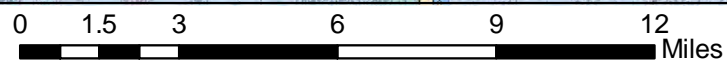
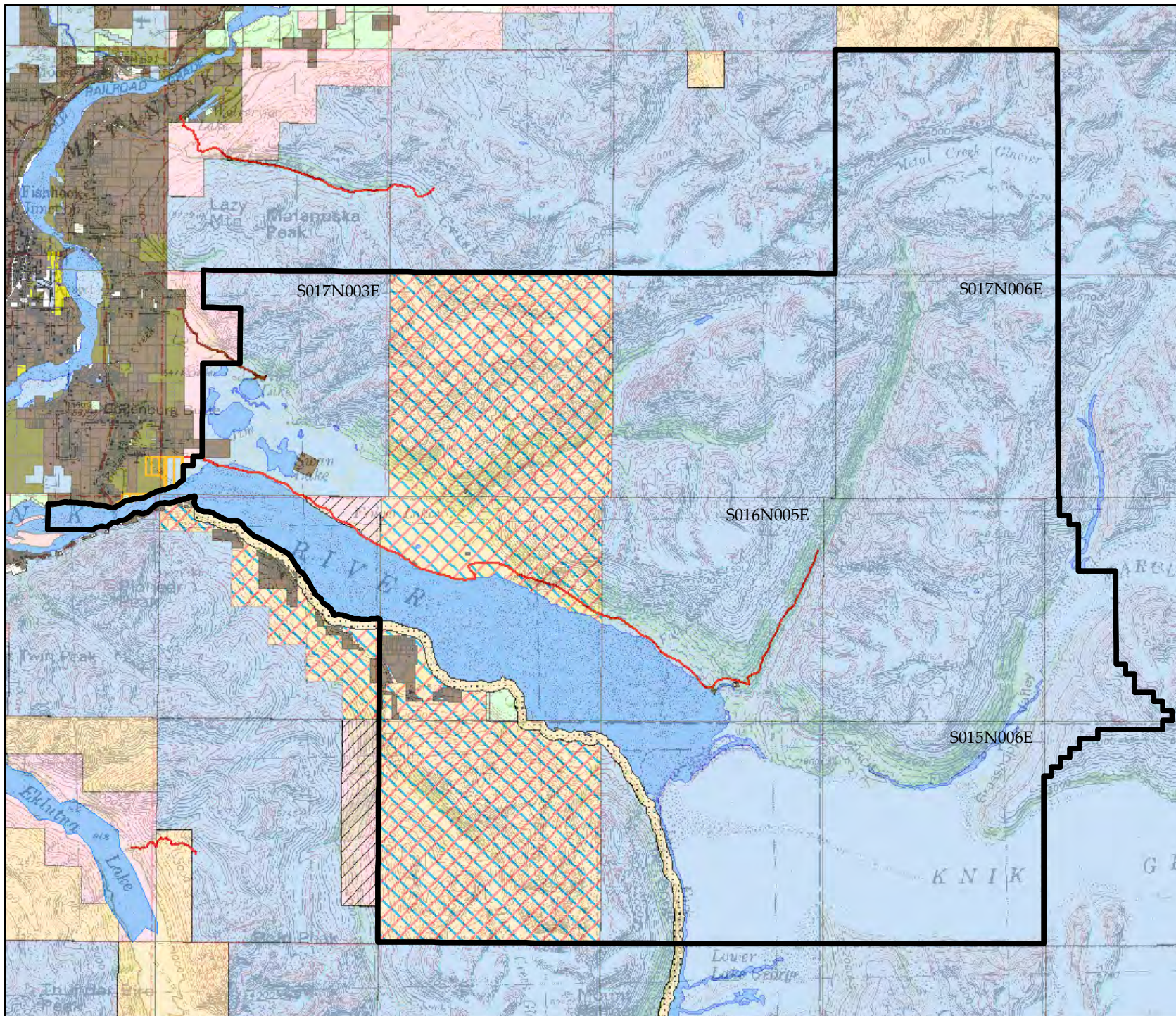
## General Land Status

-  KRPUA Legal Boundary
-  State Upland
-  State Selected Land
-  Land proposed as SUA
-  State Tide, Shore and Submerged Land
-  Federal Land
-  PLO 3324
-  Native Land
-  Native Selected Land
-  Land Subject to NALA
-  Borough Land
-  City Land
-  Mental Health Trust Land
-  Private Land
-  RS 2477
-  Easements



This map is for graphic representation only. It is intended to be used as a guide only and may not show the exact location of existing surveyed parcels or show all easements and reservations. Source documents remain the official record. Land status in general is only to section-level accuracy.

Coordinate System: NAD\_1983\_UTM\_Zone\_6N





structures such as cabins, tent platforms, and duck blinds have been constructed. Often these structures fall into disrepair and create litter throughout the area. Indiscriminate target shooting is becoming an increasing safety hazard for both users of the area as well as residents living along the borders of the PUA.

In the fall of 2005, meetings were held to discuss proposed legislation that would designate the Knik River valley and surrounding land as a Public Use Area. A final version of the bill was passed and signed into law on September 28, 2006 and was codified as AS 41.23.180-41.23.230. The legislation that established the PUA specified its purposes, provided direction for the management of uses and resources, and directed DNR to develop a plan and regulations to implement the plan. The underlying purpose of the management plan is to provide specificity to resource and use management within the PUA. Finally, the legislation granted enforcement authority to DNR and authorized it to develop penalties for the violation of laws and regulations that apply to the PUA.

## **How the Plan Was Developed**

This plan was developed following an extensive public involvement process with input from DNR management and a planning team. The planning team consisted of DNR, ADF&G and MSB representatives.

Public meetings were held to educate and inform the public on the PUA and the planning process. The meetings allowed the public to identify issues, suggest how to address these issues, provide information about the area, and to exchange ideas with agency representatives. Meetings were held in Butte, Wasilla and Anchorage.

Concurrent with the public process, resource information was collected and reviewed. The complicated land status both within and adjacent to the area was researched. Discussions with DNR and other borough, state and federal agency staff contributed information regarding resources and impacts within and adjacent to the area. Planning team meetings provided agency representatives an opportunity to discuss issues and provide input into the identification of issues and development of alternatives and proposed management actions.

During this time, the Southcentral Regional Office within the Division of Mining, Land and Water hired staff to manage the area. The Region developed regulations to address the issues of the greatest concern to the public. The Region also enlisted the help of the Department of Public Safety to patrol the area on a more frequent basis.

## **How the Plan Will be Used**

This plan has five primary functions:

- Provide overall guidance to management decisions that will have to be made for the area. Actions taken by DNR must be consistent with the plan.
- Recommend facilities to meet current and future needs of the public.
- Identify compatible and incompatible uses on which to base management guidelines and recommendations.
- Provide resource and use information to base future decisions.
- Provide the public with a meaningful opportunity to determine the future management of the PUA.

## **What the Plan Will or Will Not Do**

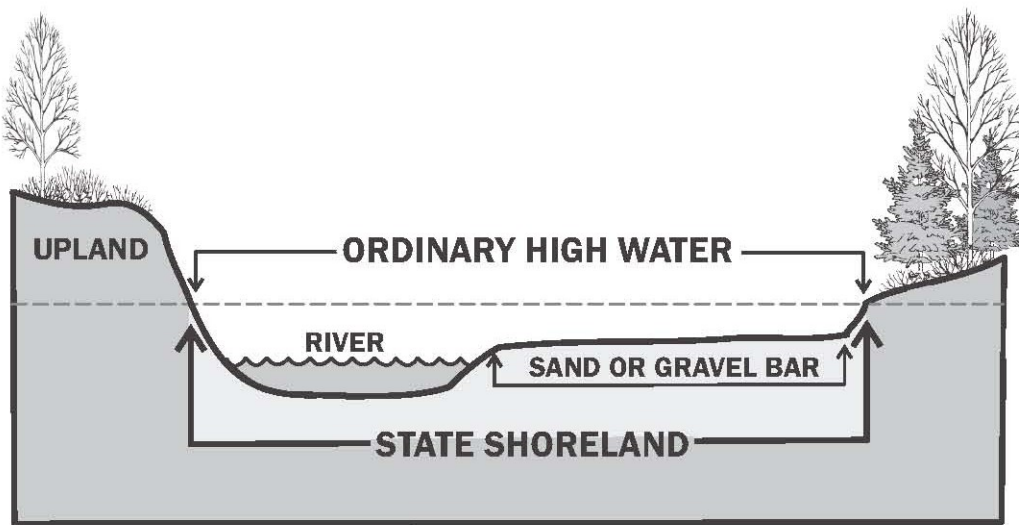
### **The plan will:**

- Provide for the management of state land as provided in the implementing legislation (AS 41.23.180-41.23.230). State land within the PUA includes both uplands and shorelands. See Figure 1-1, *State Shorelands*, page 1 - 9.
- Supersede all current management direction now provided in the *Susitna Area Plan* and the *Prince William Sound Area Plan* where these area plans include areas within the PUA.
- Reclassify all state lands previously classified in area plans.
- Address the management of certain lands adjacent to the PUA. These lands are within the planning area, but are not within the boundary of the PUA.
- Address trails management and other natural resource protection measures in the PUA.
- Recommend parcels for acquisition by the state.
- Recommend lands for inclusion in the PUA.
- Recommend shooting area designations at Maud Road and east of the Pavilion Parking area.
- Provide the basis for development of regulations necessary to implement the plan.

### **The plan will not:**

- Apply to lands owned by private individuals, Native corporations, MSB, MHT, or federal lands other than those identified in the plan.
- Affect the authorities of ADF&G to manage fish and game or ADF&G harvest regulations.
- Address land topfiled by the state but selected by Eklutna Inc. except for the need for easements across these lands.

**Figure 1-1: State Shorelands**



## **Relationship of PUA Statutes to Other Statutes**

The intent of the legislation that created the PUA is to perpetuate and enhance general public recreation and public enjoyment of fish and wildlife and to address the impacts of that use to fish and wildlife and their habitat within the PUA. All management actions by DNR must be consistent with Alaska Statutes at AS 41.23.180-41.23.230. In the absence of more specific guidance contained in AS 41.23.180-41.23.230, the other provisions of Title 38 (general resource management) apply. That is, state land is to be managed consistent with AS 41.23.180-41.23.230 and Title 38 except where the specific requirements of AS 41.23.180-41.23.230 apply. In addition, other provisions of state and federal laws and borough code may also apply to the area.

## **Relationship to Other Plans and Agreements**

Portions of this planning area have been addressed in previous state, federal and Matanuska-Susitna Borough plans. State lands within the PUA have been addressed in previous DNR plans. A recent Bureau of Land Management plan addresses federally owned land within the PUA. In addition, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough has several plans that address lands within or adjacent to the PUA.

### **State Plans**

Portions of the PUA planning area have been addressed in two previous DNR area plans. Adopted plans that overlap the PUA planning area include the *Susitna Area Plan* and the *Prince William Sound Area Plan*. Where the Knik River Public Use Area Management Plan

overlaps with these older area plans, the management plan supersedes these plans and their classifications, policies, and guidelines.

### **Federal Plans and Documents**

Two pertinent federal documents were reviewed prior to the development of the PUA Management Plan. These federal plans or documents are the *Ring of Fire Plan*, completed in 2006 by the Bureau of Land Management and the *Ecological Review of the Lake George National Natural Landmark* completed for the National Park Service in 1996.

### **Matanuska-Susitna Borough Plans**

The MSB has developed a number of plans to address development within the Borough. Plans that address lands within the PUA include: the *Matanuska-Susitna Borough Comprehensive Plan* (adopted in 1970 and updated in 2005); *Asset Management Plan for Borough-owned Lands in the Butte Area* (2007); and, the *Matanuska-Susitna Borough Coastal Management Plan* (2006). These plans have been reviewed, and the policies within them have been taken under consideration when developing this plan.

### **Agreements**

The *North Anchorage Land Agreement* (NALA) is an agreement between the State of Alaska, Eklutna Inc. and the Municipality of Anchorage. NALA is recognized by the Bureau of Land Management where it pertains to land title transfer of certain lands covered by the agreement. Several parcels of land subject to NALA are within the planning area. Management guidelines, policies and regulations in this plan do not apply to these parcels. For information on lands managed subject to NALA, please see the signed agreement as amended.

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## **Chapter 2: Goals and Management Guidelines**

### **Introduction**

All management plans are intended to accomplish certain purposes. In the case of this plan, the objective is to identify a more specific management direction for the PUA, while implementing the statutory purposes of the legislation described in AS 41.23.180-41.23.230. This more specific management direction is intended to provide guidance to DNR for the management of this important recreational and ecological area. Management direction is usually expressed through goals and management guidelines in plans prepared by DNR.

To implement the overall intent of statutory purposes of the PUA, this chapter presents goals and land management guidelines for major resources and uses. These include: access; commercial use; coordination; facilities; fees; fish and wildlife habitat; forestry; health and safety; heritage/cultural; materials; mitigation; parcel acquisition; public use sites; recreation; subsurface resources; trails; and, waterbodies.

### **Definitions**

#### **Goals**

Goals are general desired conditions that DNR attempts to achieve through management actions.

#### **Management Guidelines**

Management guidelines are intended to provide specific management direction for decisions DNR makes about the planning area. Guidelines range from giving general guidance for decision-making to identifying specific factors that need to be considered when making on-the-ground-decisions. In particular, DNR will use the guidelines when adjudicating applications for the use of state lands within the planning area. In most cases, these guidelines can be implemented through the authorization of applications for proposed uses or through agency actions. In other cases, DNR may promulgate regulations to ensure that these guidelines can be implemented and are enforceable.

## **Overall Management Direction**

DNR will focus management guidelines on maintaining and enhancing access and recreational opportunities for public and commercial users, protection of resources and environment, and law enforcement and public safety. More specific management direction is provided through the management guidelines that follow. These goals and guidelines affect all of the management units within the PUA. All facilities and management actions proposed in this and subsequent chapters are dependant on adequate funding and DNR resources.

Nothing in this or subsequent chapters or appendices in this document is intended to limit access for administration/management activities, enforcement, or for public safety within the PUA.

## Access

### Background

Securing and maintaining access to the public use area (PUA) is crucial to ensuring that the public can continue to use the PUA. State controlled access includes: Maud Road Extension (ADL #206989) and the Jim Lake Parking Area; the downstream side of the old and new Glenn bridges; and, the Knik Glacier Trail (RST 17(ADL#223176)). Access on the south side of the river is primarily from the right-of-way for the Knik River Road and from adjacent federal lands managed by BLM. Many users access from private lands adjacent to the PUA. Aircraft access within the PUA occurs on unmaintained airstrips and shorelands of the Knik River. The most heavily used access occurs from adjacent borough lands via the Pavilion Parking Area located off Sullivan Road and the Sexton and Envy trails. Many users also access the PUA by trespassing on private lands on the northeast side of the Old Glenn Bridge. Substantially fewer users access from the federal lands managed by BLM on the south side of the Knik River. An access brochure has been produced and is available from DNR.

Approximately 60,000 acres of federal lands managed by BLM in Townships 15, 16 and 17N Range 4E have been selected by Eklutna Inc. and the State of Alaska (see *General Land Status* Map 1-2, page 1 - 5). It's likely that Eklutna Inc. will receive title to these lands since Native corporations receive priority over state selections. Section 17(b) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 provides for the establishment of easements across Native lands for the purpose of maintaining public access to adjacent public lands prior to the conveyance of land to Native corporations. Prior to the transfer of these lands 17(b) easements must be established to maintain access to public lands across private lands. The effect of this land conveyance on recreational use within a portion of the PUA may be significant. The wetlands west of Friday Creek are a popular destination for recreational users and hunters alike. A number of user created trails enter this area of wetlands from land that is currently federally owned or is already privately owned by Eklutna Inc. If the federally owned land is conveyed to Eklutna Inc. it will become private land. Unauthorized use of this land off of established 17(b) easement(s) could be considered trespass. Therefore, seasonal access to, and use of, the eastern portion of the Lakes and Wetlands Unit may be limited through actions outside of the scope of this plan.

### Goal

- Maintain existing access for all users to and within the PUA, provide for future development of trails and facilities, and secure public access easements from the Pavilion Parking Area and the Sexton and Envy trails.

## Management Guidelines

- Main access trails should be improved and upgraded to support increased use.
- New trails within the planning area should be developed as sustainable trails<sup>1</sup>.
- New trails and facilities should be sited and designed to avoid or minimize impacts to fish and wildlife and their habitats.
- Primary trails accessing the PUA from adjacent MSB lands should be reserved as public easements to ensure future access, in the event that the state does not acquire ownership of these lands.
- The Trails Management Process should identify existing primary trails providing access to the PUA and reserve them as public easements. All new trails authorized by DNR will be reserved and designated for specific purposes.
- The state will work with the MSB to acquire a portion of the Jim Creek parcel which includes the Pavilion Parking area and the Sexton and Envy trails.

## Goal

- Ensure that the number and location of 17(b) easements within areas to be conveyed to a Native corporation provides adequate access to adjacent state land.

## Management Guideline

- Prior to the conveyance of federal lands, DNR's Public Access Assertion and Defense Unit will be involved in the process to reserve 17(b) easements. While all currently identified 17(b) routes are important for access to adjacent public land, several are critical to maintaining access for private landowners and miners and DNR will attempt to assert these particularly.

## Goal

- Maintain and enhance access to the PUA on the south side of the Knik River.

## Management Guideline

- DNR will recommend that BLM retain PLO 3324 in federal ownership.
- DNR may identify private parcels on the south side of the Knik River for acquisition for the purpose of enhancing access to the PUA. These lands will only be acquired from willing parties.

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<sup>1</sup> A trail that conforms to its terrain and environment is capable of handling its intended use without serious degradation.

## Commercial Use

### Background

Commercial use is increasing in the Public Use Area. Commercial operators provide the public with a variety of recreational opportunities including hunting and fishing, wildlife viewing, and access to Knik Glacier. They can also provide needed services such as overnight accommodations, and food and beverage service. Commercial use occurs in the PUA at low levels.

Currently, two operators are permitted to provide OHV and snowmobile tours within the PUA. Three operators provide airboat tours on the Knik River to the terminus of the glacier. Jet boat tours of the Knik River and terminus of the glacier began in the summer of 2007. This operator is registered for commercial use of state land. As many as five hunting guides operate within PUA.

### Goal

- Authorize those commercial operations that are consistent with the purposes for which this area was designated.

### Management Guidelines

- DNR may authorize commercial uses in any area of the PUA; however, commercial uses at the terminus of the Knik Glacier should be restricted to the southern end of the moraine. Authorizations for commercial use are subject to the requirements of the management plan.<sup>2</sup>
- DNR will ensure that public access is not restricted or limited through land use authorizations issued for commercial activities.
- Land use authorizations for permanent or semi-permanent facilities for commercial use should not be issued in locations that are high-value destinations for the recreating public or where sensitive habitats or resources are present.

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix J for specific details on see how DNR will implement this Goal.

## Coordination

### Background

There are many areas of overlapping federal, state, and borough and municipal jurisdictions within the PUA. For example, borough and municipality codes apply within their legal boundaries while Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation; ADF&G, Division of Habitat; DPOR, Office of History and Archeology; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency maintain jurisdiction in all or a portion of the PUA at the state and federal level. These entities typically have authority over a specific use or resource but taken together they can greatly affect what can occur within the PUA. In general terms they control or affect to some degree the types of uses that can occur within the PUA as well as the types and location of development.

Because of the interlocking nature of these authorities, it is necessary to coordinate with a variety of local, state, and federal agencies. It is likely that there will be two areas of focus in this coordination. These are related to the permitting requirements for new development and violations of laws or regulations. While few developments currently exist within the PUA, recommendations for the development of facilities are included in the plan and it is intended that these projects will be reviewed with other agencies at their conceptual stage. It is also likely that violations of local, state, federal law or regulations may occur, and, depending upon severity, it is intended that DNR will coordinate with state and federal regulatory agencies to determine how to best deal with these issues. Some of the current activities in the PUA may constitute violations of solid and hazardous waste disposal laws and regulations. Other activities may be contributing hazardous fluids and substances to the ground, waterbodies, and the air. Federal, state, and local agencies maintain their jurisdiction regarding these types of violations and activities.

### Goals

- Coordinate with other local, state, and federal agencies having jurisdiction within the PUA on the siting and development of future projects.

### Management Guidelines

- DNR will coordinate with appropriate federal, state, and local agencies to permit new development.
- Proposed projects will go through the appropriate Best Interest Finding (AS 38.05.035(e)) review or Alaska Coastal Management Program consistency determination prior to development, if the latter is required under DNR regulations.

- Activities below the OHWM of fish bearing water will require consultation with ADF&G and may require specific authorizations.

**Goal**

- Reduce illegal discharge of solid waste, hazardous waste, and other pollutants.

**Management Guidelines**

- Work with appropriate federal, state, or local agencies to identify and address violations of environmental laws, regulations, or ordinances.
- Consult with these agencies on implementation and enforcement programs that have been determined, through interagency review, to be necessary.
- Contact appropriate federal, state, and local agencies regarding potential violations of soil, water, and air quality.

## **Facilities**

### **Background**

Few developed facilities exist within the PUA. Facilities can be important for maintaining and enhancing uses and for mitigating the impacts of users on fish and wildlife and their habitats. The type of facility development can have major impacts on the type and level of public use. For instance, paved roads or upgraded trails can increase use levels and access, while camping facilities could increase use levels and duration of use. Benefits of facilities include a reduction in human waste and litter, and increased accessibility.

### **Goal**

- Develop facilities in areas that will maintain and enhance use and access and will serve a significant concentration of users.

### **Management Guideline**

- Facilities should be developed at major access points where use or access can be enhanced, or where the presence of facilities will decrease impacts to fish, wildlife, and their habitats.

### **Goal**

- Develop facilities that will maintain and enhance use while avoiding or minimizing the effects on fish and wildlife.

### **Management Guideline**

- Development of facilities should not occur in identified sensitive habitats unless the purpose is for educational, informational, accessibility, or management purposes or a feasible alternative does not exist.



## **Fees**

### **Background**

Consistent with the Letter of Intent provided with AS 41.23.180-230<sup>3</sup>, DNR has evaluated the institution of a fee program to pay for facilities and management of the PUA. DNR recommends that a fee schedule be implemented. It is intended that the fees collected under this program will be used for management of the PUA and the maintenance of its facilities.

### **Goal**

- Provide funding necessary for the development and maintenance of facilities, and the management of the PUA.

### **Management Guidelines**

- A fee schedule should not be implemented for use of a facility until such facilities are developed.

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<sup>3</sup> The Letter of Intent states: It is the intent of the 24<sup>th</sup> Alaska State Legislature that the Department of Natural Resources evaluate instituting user fees to pay the long term costs for management and necessary facilities associated with the public use of the Knik Public Use Area established under House Bill 307. The department should consider such fees as a component of the Management Plan that will be prepared under AS 41.23.190.

## **Fish and Wildlife Habitat**

### **Background**

The PUA has very rich and diverse habitat consisting of two general areas: the valley floor and the sub-alpine/alpine habitat. The valley floor comprises approximately 14 percent of the total land area while sub-alpine/alpine and glacier comprises the remaining 86 percent.

The floor of the valley is dominated by Knik River and associated braided channels, sloughs, and exposed shorelands and includes extensive lakes and wetlands. The lakes, wetlands, and vegetated shorelands of the valley floor provides a rich habitat for a diversity of fish and wildlife species including waterfowl, moose, bear, wolves, and many small furbearers. The extensive lakes and wetlands within the PUA are used for resting and staging during the spring and fall migrations of waterfowl and shorebirds. A number of these waterfowl stay in the PUA to nest, rear broods, or use available habitat for the summer. Waterbodies on the valley floor are important habitat for resident and anadromous fish populations. Jim Creek supports a popular coho salmon fishery. Many of the lakes are used for spawning and rearing habitat by coho, sockeye and chum salmon.

The sub-alpine and alpine habitat is used by many species including bear, moose, sheep, and goats. The lower elevations of the sub-alpine are commonly used by moose and bear for forage and rearing young. While goats and sheep tend to use the alpine habitat, sheep are commonly found at lower elevations at several locations in the PUA.

Many members of the public indicated that current uses are negatively impacting nesting swans and loons. Swan numbers and cygnet survival rates appear to be stable within the PUA. Nonetheless, a critical life stage for swans and loons exists while they are incubating their eggs and rearing their young (typically from May 15 to August 31); at this period swans and loons are highly susceptible to harassment from recreational users. If the disturbance is serious enough, swans and loons may abandon their nest sites, young, or cygnets. Once abandoned, swans and loons will not re-nest for the remainder of that year.

AS 41.23.180-41.23.230, provides direction to DNR for the protection of fish and wildlife habitat. This statute requires DNR to “perpetuate and enhance” the enjoyment of fish and wildlife, and to “protect and maintain” habitats for fish, wildlife and migratory waterfowl nesting so traditional use may continue. To achieve the mandate of perpetuating and enhancing the public use while protecting habitat, DNR has worked with ADF&G to identify areas that require special management attention. After the review of available resource data and discussions with ADF&G, DNR has concluded that there are currently no areas of critical habitat within the PUA; however, several areas of sensitive habitat within the PUA have been identified. These include: swan and loon nesting sites, waterfowl nesting areas, fish spawning and rearing locations, and moose calving concentration areas. These areas

have been determined by DNR to merit increased management priority in order to minimize impacts to fish and wildlife and other sensitive habitats.

AS 41.23.200(d)(2) specifically addresses off-road motor vehicle trails and requires DNR to “make accommodations that will provide the shortest possible route to avoid critical habitat.” Thus the statutes envisioned both continued protection and use of the habitats and provided specific direction to DNR where critical habitat was found.

Because the enabling statutes for the PUA did not provide a definition of “critical habitat,” DNR has developed a definition that is specific to the PUA and recognizes the implied importance of this type of habitat as opposed to other habitat types. DNR and ADF&G Statutes (particularly Titles 16 & 38) do not contain a definition of critical habitat; however, statutes specific to state Critical Habitat Areas (AS 16.20.500) suggest that critical habitat areas are areas that are crucial to the perpetuation of a fish or wildlife species. DNR’s definition of critical habitat for the PUA embodies this concept and is found in Appendix A.

To better understand habitat types within the PUA, DNR reviewed resource data and information developed by state and federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, and individuals<sup>4</sup>. Additionally, DNR staff had discussions and on-site meetings with ADF&G staff to discuss habitats for several fish and wildlife species. Based on the information, data, and discussions, DNR identified areas of habitat that require special management attention. These areas have been identified as “sensitive habitat” and include: swan and loon nesting sites, waterfowl nesting areas, fish spawning and rearing locations, and moose calving concentration areas. These areas have been determined by DNR to merit increased management focus in order to avoid or minimize impacts to fish and wildlife and other sensitive habitats. The definition of sensitive habitat is included in Appendix A.

For the purposes of this plan, “critical habitat” is primarily distinguished from “sensitive habitat” within the PUA in that critical habitat is essential for the perpetuation of a fish and wildlife species while sensitive habitat is important for a species of fish and wildlife during a

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<sup>4</sup> Information reviewed includes: ADF&G data showing habitat ranges of various fish and wildlife species, included as appendices to the management plan. United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) data from 2000 analyzing trumpeter swan population status. USFWS’s 2005 North American Trumpeter Swan Survey. Audubon Site Profile for Jim Creek Basin. ADF&G, Division of Wildlife Conservation, data for refuges and sanctuaries, for regional comparisons of habitat for relevant fish and wildlife species, including Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge and Susitna Flats State Game Refuge. Knik River Watershed Group, Baseline Water Bird Surveys. ADF&G Preliminary Assessment of Waterfowl Resources, KRPUA. William Quirk memoranda providing observations of nesting swans and cygnets within KRPUA and adjacent areas. ADF&G Catalogue of Waters Important for the Spawning, Rearing of Migration of Anadromous Fishes. Joint agency plan developed by U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Department of the Interior, and Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation: Cook Inlet Subarea Contingency Plan maps and text, identifying areas of essential habitat for waterfowl and wildlife necessary for protection during the initial stages of an oil spill event. Various agency data sheets discussing human disturbances to loons. USFWS publication “Human Disturbances of Waterfowl: Causes, Effects, and Management.” Various scientific publications funded by USFWS and USDA analyzing impacts of human activities on water birds. And, Consultations with ADF&G staff, indicating that without further study DNR could not determine current “critical” habitat within the KRPUA.

particular life stage. A key distinction between “sensitive” habitat as designated by DNR and “critical” habitat for purposes of AS 41.23.200(d)(2) is that the former term is not tied, or limited, to determining the necessity of re-routing existing off-road motor vehicle trails. Therefore, the “sensitive” habitat designation can be used prospectively as a planning tool, for example, to determine where new trails should not be allowed in the first instance. By contrast, AS 41.23.200(d)(2) restricts the function of a “critical” habitat finding to the re-routing of existing trails.

After the review of available resource data, information, and discussions with ADF&G, DNR was able to identify “sensitive habitat” but concluded that there are currently no areas of critical habitat within the PUA. This determination does not preclude a future determination of critical habitat during the more specific Trails Management Process. If DNR determines during the process, in consultation with ADF&G, that critical habitat is present, trails will be re-routed or accommodations otherwise made to avoid the critical habitat.

### **Goal**

- Protect and maintain fish and wildlife habitat while allowing for continued recreational use.

### **Management Guidelines**

- All new, up-graded, expanded, or re-routed trails or facilities within the planning area should be sited and designed to avoid impacts to fish and wildlife and their habitats. If impacts to these habitats cannot be avoided, they should be minimized.
- All trails and developed facilities should be sited and developed to minimize impacts to anadromous waterbodies. Stream crossings should be developed generally perpendicular to the stream flow.
- Within 100 feet of an anadromous waterbody, excluding the Knik River and shorelands of the Knik River, trails should not be developed parallel to the ordinary high water mark. See Figure 1-1, page 1 - 9 for a depiction of state shorelands.
- DNR will initiate an educational program to inform the public of species and habitats that are susceptible to disturbance by recreational use. It is intended that DNR will install informational signs at major access points that provide information including; sensitive fish and wildlife habitats including swan, loon, and other waterfowl nesting habitat, the location of nest sites and importance of the incubation and rearing period, the potential for disturbing these species through recreational use, and recommendations for minimizing impact to species and their habitat. These signs should be placed at principle access points as determined by DNR. Effectiveness of education and signage will be re-evaluated in 5 years from the effective date of the plan. In the event that these techniques are not found effective after a period of monitoring, regulatory controls may be necessary.

- DNR will evaluate the feasibility of annually locating and signing swan and loon nesting habitat. To accomplish this DNR will, subsequent to plan adoption:
  - Engage in discussions with ADF&G, non-profit conservations groups or other third party stakeholders to determine their interest and ability to identify and sign active swan and loon nesting sites. Because of limited resources in DNR, it is believed that the most effective means of ensuring that identification occurs on a periodic basis is to involve these groups in this effort. If this interest and capabilities exist, DNR will provide support to the selected group in the annual identification and signing process. In addition to signing, DNR will develop a map that identifies sensitive habitat locations, including nesting areas, and make it along with educational materials, available to the public.
- As new information regarding fish and wildlife populations becomes available from ADF&G, DNR should re-evaluate the habitat in the PUA to determine if areas could be identified as sensitive habitat.
- DNR should consult with ADF&G to determine if uses are impacting fish, wildlife and their habitats.
- The following guidelines apply to uses requiring an authorization from DNR.
  - Authorizations that potentially affect bald eagles will be consistent with the state and federal Endangered Species acts and the Bald Eagle Protection Act of 1940 as amended. Applicable standards are drawn from a cooperative agreement signed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other federal agencies, or such subsequent standards that may be promulgated. These standards, however, may not be adequate in all circumstances, and the USFWS may determine that additional measures are necessary. In addition, meeting the guidelines does not absolve the party from the penalty provisions of the Bald Eagle Protection Act; therefore, the USFWS should be consulted when activities may affect bald or golden eagles.
    - **Siting Facilities to Avoid Eagle Nests.** Facilities determined by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to cause significant disturbance to nesting eagles will not be allowed within 330 feet of any bald eagle nest site, whether the nest is currently active or not.
    - **Activities Disturbing Nesting Eagles.** Activities the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service determines likely to cause significant disturbance to nesting eagles will be prohibited within 330 feet of active bald eagle nests between March 15 and August 31. Temporary activities and facilities that do not alter eagle nesting habitat or disturb nesting eagles, as determined by the USFWS, may be allowed at other times.
  - Portions of the PUA are important for moose calving concentration areas. Calving typically occurs from May through June, depending upon location. Uses that are likely to produce levels of acoustical or visual disturbance sufficient to disturb calving or post-calving aggregations that cannot be seasonally restricted

should not be authorized in these areas. Uses may be authorized in these areas at other times of the year. DNR authorizations should include seasonal restrictions on activities that would produce significant acoustical or visual disturbance during sensitive periods.

Moose calving areas change over time. ADF&G should be consulted prior to issuing an authorization in an area suspected to contain such concentrations in order to better determine: 1) the location of calving areas; 2) when activities within these areas should be avoided; and 3) identify appropriate mitigation measures if no feasible or prudent alternative site exists.

- In trumpeter swan nesting areas, uses that would disturb nesting swans or detrimentally alter the nesting habitat should be avoided. The siting of permanent facilities, including roads, material sites, storage areas, and other forms of permanent structures should be avoided within one-quarter mile of known nesting sites. Surface entry should also be avoided within one-quarter mile of nesting sites between April 1 and August 31. Leases or permits may require seasonal restrictions on activities to avoid disturbance to swans. Consult with ADF&G to identify current or potential nesting habitat and to determine guidelines to follow and activities to avoid.
- In waterfowl nesting habitat, activities requiring a lease, permit, or development plan, and producing habitat disturbance or high levels of acoustical or visual disturbance from sources such as boat traffic, vegetation clearing, construction, blasting, dredging, and seismic operations, should be avoided during sensitive periods such as nesting, staging, or brood-rearing periods. Where it is not feasible and prudent to avoid such activities, other mitigation measures may be required to avoid significant adverse impacts. Consult with ADF&G to identify areas of important waterfowl in addition to those identified in the Plan and to determine appropriate mitigation or avoidance measures.

# Forestry

## Background

The sub-alpine and lower elevations of the PUA are covered by boreal forest. There are six general forest cover types in the area. The first cover type consists of a predominately cottonwood/poplar forest, this type occurs mostly in the riparian areas of the PUA. The second type is a mixed cottonwood/poplar and white spruce type with cottonwood/poplar or white spruce being the predominate species depending on the location of the stand. The third forest cover type is a stand that is predominately white spruce. The fourth forest type is a mixed species type consisting of cottonwood/poplar, white spruce, paper birch and quaking aspen. The fifth type is a predominately paper birch type usually occurring on the more upland sites of the PUA and the sixth type is predominately quaking aspen and has the smallest acreage in the area, also occurring on the more upland sites. Alder and willow (spp) are present in all of the cover types but are most prevalent in the riparian areas. Many wildlife species use the forested habitat on the valley floor and sub-alpine environments. Large furbearers use forested areas for cover and forage. Birds use this habitat for nesting, feeding and roosting. Forested riparian areas provide shade to cool waterbodies and woody debris that provides fish habitat.

Although no commercial timber harvesting has occurred in recent years, some areas within the Public Use Area have been harvested in the past. Commercial timber harvesting to enhance wildlife habitat and to regenerate forests for the early successional stage species may occur in the PUA. The Division of Forestry (DOF) has not identified any firewood collection areas nor issued permits for personal or commercial firewood cutting, although some incidental harvesting of firewood does occur in the PUA. Because of high heating fuel prices, DOF may consider identifying firewood collection area(s) within the PUA in the future.

With many recreation users concentrated in one area with residences located nearby, forest fire is a major concern. Wildland fires, unattended campfires and bonfires have become a common occurrence in recent years.

## Goal

- Maintain forested areas for forest regeneration, wildlife and fish habitat, and protect users and nearby residences from wildfires.

### **Management Guideline**

- Permits for commercial or personal use firewood harvest<sup>5</sup>, may be authorized in the PUA after a collection area is identified by DOF and DMLW.
- DOF may conduct timber removal for such administrative purposes as timber salvage, habitat manipulation, fire fuel reduction, or other purposes as determined appropriate by DNR. Such operations may occur in throughout the PUA.

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<sup>5</sup> Persons may still harvest dead and down trees without prior written authorization from DNR for personal use warming and/or cooking fires.



## Health and Safety

### Background

Some members of the public avoid using the PUA during certain times or in certain areas because of unlawful activities taking place or activities that are conducted in an unsafe manner. Others, while continuing to use the area, do not feel safe while these unlawful or unsafe uses are occurring. These types of uses are, for the most part, concentrated within a small area of the PUA, mostly near access points near the Old Glenn Highway and the mouth of Jim Creek.

If it weren't for regular cleanup efforts of local residents, individuals, stakeholder groups, the state and the borough, the PUA would have a much larger accumulation of trash than it currently does. Over the years literally hundreds of vehicles have been abandoned in the PUA. These vehicles are often burned and potentially hazardous substances such as oil, battery acid, and gasoline get into the soil and waterbodies. Other trash is brought into the area for disposal whether it is household waste, for shooting practice, or left after parties and at campsites. To add to this problem, throughout the summer and fall, particularly during hunting and fishing seasons, long-term camps are set up and then abandoned at the seasons' end. Because of the large number of users in a relatively small area and the lack of sanitation facilities, human waste and toilet paper are evident throughout the western portion of the planning area. Many of the most popular campsites are too unsightly to attract campers.

Unlawful activities have become prevalent in portions of the PUA. These activities are primarily located adjacent to major access points where access for law enforcement is difficult. For example, large parties, particularly on weekends, are common with underage drinking, operating vehicles while intoxicated, unsafe shooting, use and selling of illicit drugs, bonfires and fireworks. Injuries are not uncommon. The burned and abandoned vehicles recovered in the area are sometimes stolen or in a few instances are vehicles that were vandalized while their owners were recreating in the PUA.

Solutions to many of the issues described above include: an increased DNR field presence and additional law enforcement with the assistance of the Department of Public Safety; educating the public on resources and impacts; working with the District Attorney's office on accepting cases from within the PUA; and, working closely with members of the public and users of the PUA. Regulations may need to be promulgated to ensure that the efforts of field and enforcement staff are effective in achieving compliance with PUA regulations.

### Goal

- Provide a safe environment for recreation and eliminate discharge of litter and hazardous materials.

### **Management Guidelines**

- Develop sanitary and waste disposal facilities in areas of concentrated use such as by parking and camping areas.
- Develop and employ educational strategies to change behavior.

### **Goal**

- Address safety concerns related to discharge of firearms, boat use, and unsafe or unlawful activities.

### **Management Guidelines**

- Shooting areas with specified hours/days of operation should be designated within the planning area. Areas will be located where shooting can occur in a safe manner and where impacts to fish and wildlife habitat are minimized. Although DNR will identify and designate areas for shooting range development, it is intended that local groups interested in operation of a shooting range would apply to DNR for development and operation of a facility.
- Following the adoption of the Management Plan, DNR will evaluate the Maud Road and Pavilion areas to determine the feasibility of construction of shooting facilities. It is intended that at least one of these sites will be developed over the next five years, subject to the availability of funding. The recommended shooting areas are depicted on Map 2-1, page 2 - 17. Time of use restrictions for shooting areas will be designated by DNR.
- DNR should seasonally restrict the use of motorized boats, snowmobiles, and OHV's on Manmade Lake and establish a seasonal speed limit around Manmade Lake in order to provide safe recreational opportunities.
- Develop and employ educational strategies to change behavior.

### **Goal**

- Increase DNR and law enforcement presence in the PUA and draft regulations that are necessary to implement the plan and manage state resources.

### **Management Guidelines**

- Initiate and continue DNR field presence in the PUA.
- Continue to work with the Department of Public Safety to enforce state statutes and regulations.
- Continue to work closely with users of the PUA to obtain information on violations of local, state, and federal laws and regulations.

**Goal**

- Increase public safety by reducing potential for wildfires.



**Management Guideline**

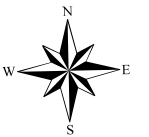
- Initiate and continue DNR field presence in the PUA.

# Knik River Public Use Area

(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

## Recommended Designated Shooting Areas

-  KRPUA Planning Boundary
-  Recommended Shooting Areas



This map is for graphic representation only  
and is intended to be used only as a guide.

Coordinate System: NAD\_1983\_UTM\_Zone\_6N



0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 2 Miles

## **Heritage/Cultural**

### **Background**

The Alaska Historic Preservation Act (AS 41.35.010) states, “It is the policy of the state to preserve and protect the historic, prehistoric, and archeological resources of Alaska from loss, desecration, and destruction so that the scientific, historic, and cultural heritage embodied in these resources may pass undiminished to future generations. To this end, the legislature finds and declares that the historic, prehistoric, and archeological resources of the state are properly the subject of concerted and coordinated efforts exercised on behalf of the general welfare of the public in order that these resources may be located, preserved, studied, exhibited, and evaluated.”

The Knik River valley has been used extensively by Native Alaskans and early European settlers. Artifacts related to Alaska Natives and early non-native settlers exist in the PUA.

### **Goal**

- The Alaska Historic Preservation Act establishes the state’s basic goal: to preserve, protect, and interpret the historic, prehistoric, and archaeological resources of Alaska so that the scientific, historic, and cultural heritage values embodied in these resources may pass undiminished to future generations.

### **Management Guidelines**

- Heritage Resources Identification. Identify and determine the significance of all heritage resources on state land through heritage resource surveys or inventories. These should be conducted by the Office of History and Archaeology (OHA), contingent on funding, in areas this agency determines to have a high potential to contain important heritage sites and for which there is insufficient information to identify and protect these sites. This effort can be supplemented through:
  - Research on heritage resources on state land by qualified individuals and organizations; and
  - Cooperative efforts for planned surveys and inventories between state, federal, local, and/or Native groups.
- Heritage Resources Protection. Significant heritage resources within the PUA should be protected through the review of proposed projects by OHA as part of the process. If OHA determines that there may be an adverse effect on heritage resources, OHA will provide recommendations to minimize these effects.
- The Office of History and Archeology should be contacted during the initial planning phase of any project that involves a ground disturbing activity.

- Recreation Facilities Adjacent to Heritage Resources. Recreation facilities that might make heritage sites more susceptible to damage and disturbance because of increased public use should not be placed adjacent to the heritage sites without mitigating measures. Prior to new construction or modification of existing routes, or facilities, the OHA should be contacted to determine if historical, archeological, or pre-historic site(s) are reported. This data set is continually being updated and, should be consulted on all proposed projects.
- Reporting of Heritage Sites. Staff will report the presence of new heritage sites to OHA. OHA will add this information to the Alaska Heritage Resources Survey (AHRs) database. The AHRs database is an inventory of all reported historic and prehistoric sites within the State of Alaska.

# Materials

## Background

Significant quantities of materials including sand, gravel and rock, are found throughout the PUA. The extraction of materials may be permitted in the PUA, although there are no current authorizations for such uses. A joint mining operation between the State of Alaska and Eklutna Inc. is authorized in the North Anchorage Land Agreement (NALA<sup>6</sup>) for a small area of state shorelands downstream of the Old Glenn Highway Bridge. To date, no materials have been extracted from this site, although Eklutna Inc. has indicated an interest in the development of this materials source.

## Goal

- Provide opportunities to extract materials where that activity will minimize impacts to recreational use or fish and wildlife habitat.

## Management Guidelines

- Gravel extraction operations are an allowed use and can be authorized by DNR where such operations will not adversely affect recreational activities, fish or wildlife habitat, wetlands, or heritage or cultural resources. It is expected that most operations of this type will occur within the shorelands of the Knik River.
- Authorizations issues by DNR shall include stipulations to avoid or minimize impacts to fish and wildlife, their habitats, heritage or cultural resources, and recreational uses. Access to recreational areas shall not be impaired.
- Gravel extraction authorizations issued by DNR should, where possible, ensure that such activities are not conducted in high-use recreation areas. Timing restrictions should be considered in these authorizations. Access to recreational areas shall not be impaired.
- Materials extraction operations should be conducted in such a manner that prevents unnecessary and undue degradation of the land and water resources.
- Material sites should not be located near residential areas and other areas of high human use. Sufficient land should be allocated to the material site for such screening.

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<sup>6</sup> NALA is an agreement between the State of Alaska, Municipality of Anchorage, and Eklutna Inc. that resolves land disputes and determines future ownership of military lands if they are declared excess by the military.

- Following cessation of use, material sites shall be rehabilitated according to AS 27.19.020 and 11 AAC 97.250.
- Prior to granting authorizations for materials sales, DNR should coordinate with MSB to determine applicable supplemental zoning requirements.



# Mitigation

## Background

When issuing permits and leases or otherwise authorizing the use or development of state lands, DNR will recognize the requirements of the activity or development and the benefits it may have to uses and habitat when determining stipulations or measures needed to protect fish and wildlife, or their habitats. When an authorization may result in significant adverse impacts to fish and wildlife or their habitats, DNR will consult with ADF&G. The costs of mitigation relative to the benefits to be gained will be considered in the implementation of this policy.

The department will enforce stipulations and measures, and will require the responsible party to remedy any significant damage to fish and wildlife, or their habitats that may occur as a direct result of the party's failure to comply with applicable law, regulations, or the conditions of the permit or lease.

## Goal

- Minimize impacts of authorized activities on fish, wildlife and their habitats.

## Management Guidelines

When determining appropriate stipulations and measures, the department will apply the following steps in order of priority. Mitigation requirements listed in other guidelines in this plan will also follow these steps.

1. Avoid anticipated, significant adverse effects on fish and wildlife, or their habitats through siting, timing, or other management options.
2. When significant adverse effects cannot be avoided by design, siting, timing, or other management options, the adverse effect of the use or development will be minimized.
3. If significant loss of fish or wildlife habitat occurs, the loss will be rectified, to the extent feasible and prudent, by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected area to a useful state.
4. DNR will consider requiring replacement with other areas with like resource values or enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat when steps 1 through 3 cannot avoid substantial and irreversible loss of habitat. ADF&G will clearly identify the species affected, the need for replacement or enhancement, and the suggested method for addressing the impact. Replacement with or enhancement of similar habitats of the affected species in the same region is preferable. DNR will consider only those replacement and enhancement techniques that have either been proven to be, or are

likely to be, effective and that will result in a benefit to the species impacted by the development. Replacement or enhancement will only be required by DNR if it is determined to be in the best interest of the state either through the Best Interest Finding process AS 38.05.035(e) or permit review process. Replacement may include structural solutions, such as creating spawning or rearing ponds for salmon, creating wetlands for waterfowl; or non-structural measures, such as research or management of the species affected, legislative or administrative allocation of lands to a long-term level of habitat protection that is sufficiently greater than that which they would otherwise receive, or fire management to increase habitat productivity.

## Parcel Acquisition

### Background

Three parcels, or portions of, have been identified by DNR as priorities for acquisition. Parcel one, the Jim Creek Parcel, is currently owned by MSB and contains the Pavilion Parking Area and Sexton and Envy trails. It is the most heavily used access site into the PUA and is heavily impacted by recreational use. The second parcel is a privately owned parcel on the northeast side of the Old Glenn Highway Bridge. Access across this parcel is in trespass on an existing trail. It receives high levels of use and is heavily impacted. Parcel three shares the eastern boundary with parcel two and is currently owned by the Mental Health Trust (MHT). The third parcel is heavily used for recreation and access to the remainder of the PUA during high water levels. Access and use on this parcel is considered in trespass as well. These parcels are functionally part of the PUA and will be managed by DNR consistent with the adjacent unit in the PUA once acquired by the State. See section titled *Other Lands* in Chapter 4 beginning on page 4 - 6 and Appendix E *Special Use Area Designations* for information on these lands adjacent to the PUA.

### Goal

- Maintain access to the PUA through acquisition of access sites and/or public easements in selected areas.

### Management Guidelines

- All acquired lands will be recommended to the Legislature for inclusion in the PUA.
- Until they are included into the PUA, all acquired lands will be recommended as a SUA and will be managed consistent with the intent, guidelines and recommendations for the PUA. The SUA designation for state owned land in section 31, Township 17N, Range 3E (ADL 230206) will be amended to include these parcels when they are acquired by the state.
- SUA designations will only apply to lands acquired by the state.
- The state will work with MSB to acquire the portion of the Jim Creek Parcel that encompasses the Pavilion Parking area and the Sexton and Envy trails.
- Over time and based upon need, other private lands that provide or are capable of providing access to the PUA will be considered for acquisition from willing sellers<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Currently there are no additional private parcels identified for acquisition. DNR will only purchase private land from willing sellers.

- The state should acquire the private parcel on the northeast side of the Old Glenn Highway Bridge.
- If DNR does not acquire the private parcel, DNR should explore the possibility of acquiring legal access through this parcel.

## Public Use Sites

### Background

Public Use Sites are sites on state land and water that have been identified as particularly important for public access, recreation, camping, fishing, or other recreation or public use. These sites have high public value and therefore should receive a higher degree of management attention. Designation of these sites in this management plan serves to recognize the importance of these areas for continued public use. Two public use sites are identified in this plan: Jim Lake and Jim Creek. Additionally, the Jim Lake Public Use Site will be expanded to include the overlook on the bluff at the north end of the lake. See Map 2-2, page 2 - 29.

As use patterns change and more information becomes available, new sites may be designated and should be included in the plan. Such additions will be at the discretion of the Southcentral Regional Manager. The procedures for a “special exception” are to be followed in plan revisions.

### Goal

- Identify areas that have high public use values and manage them to preserve that use and their recreation values.

### Management Guidelines

- The following Public Use Sites are designated in the plan: Jim Lake and Jim Creek. The subsequent management guidelines apply to these sites and will be included in the second phase of regulations to be developed by DNR. Camps may remain in one place for up to seven days before they must be disassembled and moved to another location at least one mile away. A person may not relocate a camp, structure or facility to a site within one mile of the initial site for at least four consecutive days.
- Commercial camps can be authorized within a public use site for up to seven consecutive days. A commercial camp may not relocate to a site within one mile of the initial site for at least four consecutive days. Long-term commercial camps greater than seven consecutive days are not authorized.
- Improvements such as public facilities, docks, boat ramps, and public airstrips can be authorized.

- Within a Public Use Site, camping may be restricted to a campground, identified campsites, or within a certain distance of a developed facility when a facility is developed.<sup>8</sup> DNR will restrict recreational discharge of weapons in public use sites to protect public safety.

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<sup>8</sup> Camping outside of a Public Use Site remains subject to restrictions provided in Generally Allowed Uses of State Land.

# Knik River Public Use Area

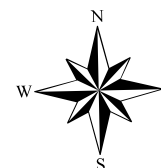
(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

## Public Use Sites

### Map 2-2

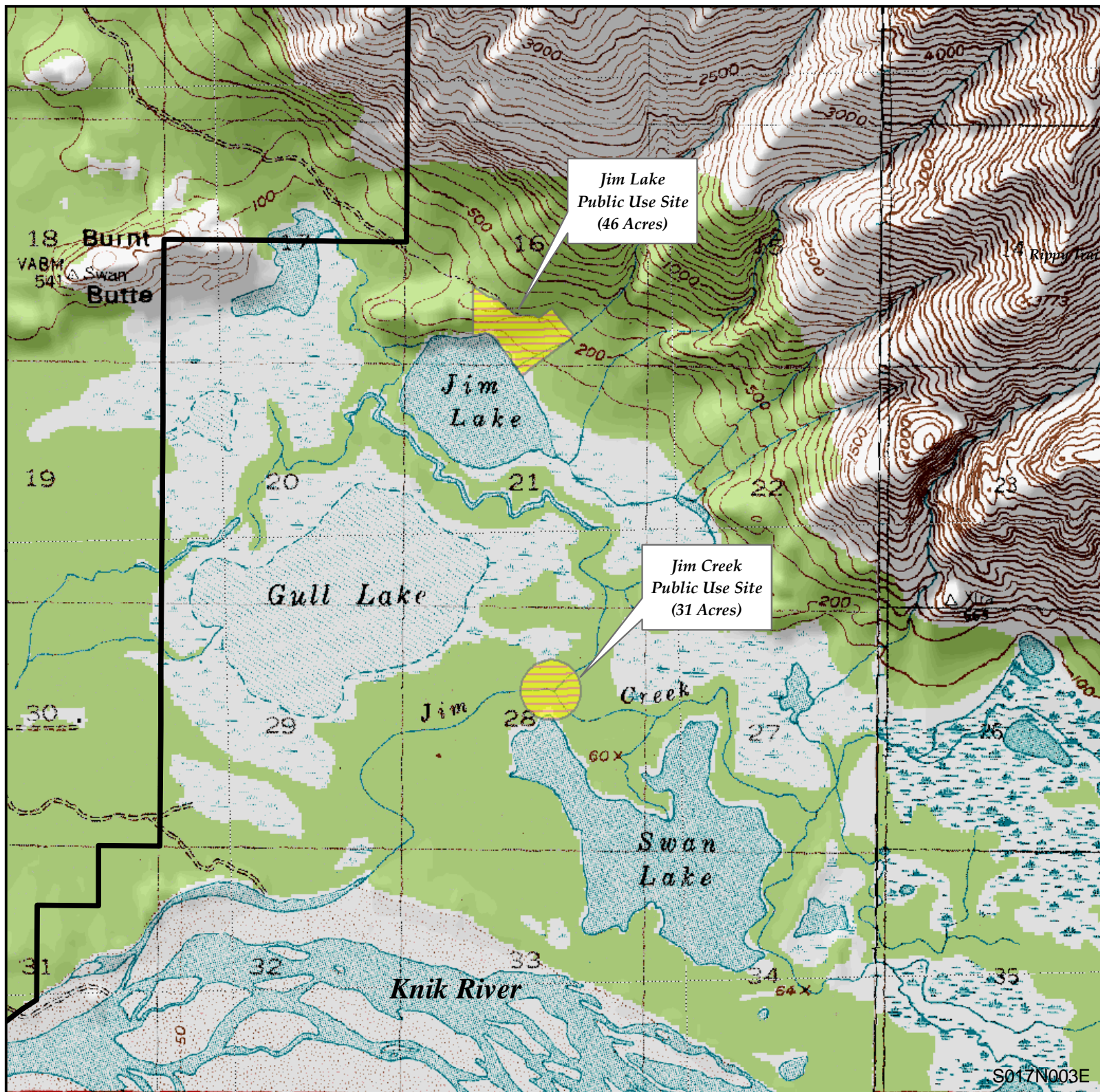
-  KRPUA Legal Boundary
-  Public Use Sites

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles



This map is for graphic representation only  
and is intended to be used only as a guide.

Coordinate System: NAD\_1983\_UTM\_Zone\_6N



## Recreation

### Background

As the populations of the Municipality of Anchorage and the MSB have increased in recent years, so has the use of the Knik River valley. As a result, more users are competing for the resources available in this area.

OHV use related to recreation, hunting and fishing has increased significantly in the Knik River valley in recent years. As a result, numerous trails have been created and areas that previously received little or no motorized use are now seeing frequent use. This has resulted in numerous trails being created across wetlands, waterbodies and environmentally sensitive areas. See Map 2-4, page 2 - 37 for a depiction of wetlands within the PUA. Because of the increased use, conflicts have developed between users. While additional trails provide more opportunities to access the PUA for some, others are displaced. Developed non-motorized recreation opportunities are limited within the public use area.

Recreational use patterns have predictable spatial and temporal characteristics and seasonality of use. During the hunting and fishing seasons, use increases across the entire PUA but is highest during weekends and holidays. Areas such as the Friday and Metal creek drainages, which normally see little use, see frequent use as hunters access the area in search of moose, sheep and goats. Maude Road and Mud Lake receive higher use during fishing, waterfowl and moose hunting season. Use of expansive wetland areas increases too as hunter's traverse these areas while moose and waterfowl hunting. The area around the mouth of Jim Creek receives increased use as coho salmon return to spawn in early fall.

Outside of the hunting and fishing seasons, use is limited during the week and is the highest on weekends and holidays. During these times, the Pavilion Parking Area is often filled to capacity and the access points near the Old Glenn Highway Bridge are heavily used. The parking area at Jim Lake also receives increased use. OHV use is high in the vicinity of the mouth of Jim Creek and the Old Glenn Highway Bridge, and progressively decreases further up the valley in the direction of Knik Glacier. Low to moderate levels of OHV and highway vehicle use occurs at the Knik Glacier.<sup>9</sup>

Shooting is frequent at many locations, but primarily occurs at existing user created "shooting areas." On weekends, as evening approaches and more individuals arrive in the PUA, unlawful activities become more frequent. Such activities include the wrecking and burning of automobiles, reckless shooting, and underage drinking.

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<sup>9</sup> All levels of use discussed in this plan are relative to other use levels occurring in the PUA. A formal study of use was not conducted.



## Goal

- Protect and maintain habitats for fish and wildlife while perpetuating and enhancing recreational use.

## Management Guidelines

- The Trails Management Process<sup>10</sup> (TMP) should identify trails that have significant negative impacts to fish and wildlife habitat. The impacts of these trails should be minimized through re-routing, spatial and/or temporal restrictions, or in some cases, closure of trails.
- The TMP should identify opportunities to develop new trails within the planning area to maintain or enhance motorized and non-motorized use. These trails should be developed consistent with the following guidelines:
  - New trails within the planning area will be developed as sustainable trails and should be sited to avoid sensitive areas and be designed to minimize impacts to fish and wildlife and their habitats.
  - If new facilities or trails cannot avoid sensitive areas including waterfowl nesting habitat, fish spawning and rearing areas, moose calving concentration areas, or swan or loon nesting areas, they should be designed and developed to minimize adverse impacts to these resources.
- DNR will identify particularly sensitive habitats and provide management guidelines and recommendations that will avoid or minimize impacts to these habitats. See Trails and Fish and Wildlife Habitat sections.
- Current and expected future increases in OHV and highway vehicle uses should continue on the forested state uplands adjacent to the Pavilion Parking area, the forested uplands in Unit A, and the un-vegetated shorelands of the Knik River in units A and C. See Map 2-3, page 2 - 35 for a depiction of this area. This area should be managed for increasing use levels. Ground disturbance and rutting related to current OHV and highway vehicles use has less impact on the identified area than on the adjacent habitats. Except for impacts related to rutting and ground disturbance, uses in the area described above remain subject to all local, state, and federal authorities for other impacts associated with their use. DNR should amend regulations to allow activities that cause rutting and ground disturbance in excess of 6 inches in the area identified above.

## Goal

- Provide for the protection and use of wetlands.

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<sup>10</sup> The Trails Management Process is described in detail in Appendix D.

### **Management Guidelines**



- Redundant trails or trails determined by DNR to have significant negative impacts on wetland functions should be closed to use. The closure of trails will be based upon the results of the TMP.
- New trails in wetlands should be avoided, but if no reasonable alternative location exists, they should be developed in a manner that minimizes impacts to the wetlands excluding the area depicted on Map 2-3, page 2 - 35. In all cases such trails should be developed as sustainable trails.
- Recreational public facilities and projects should avoid wetlands and areas of sensitive fish and wildlife habitat.

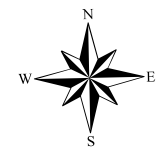
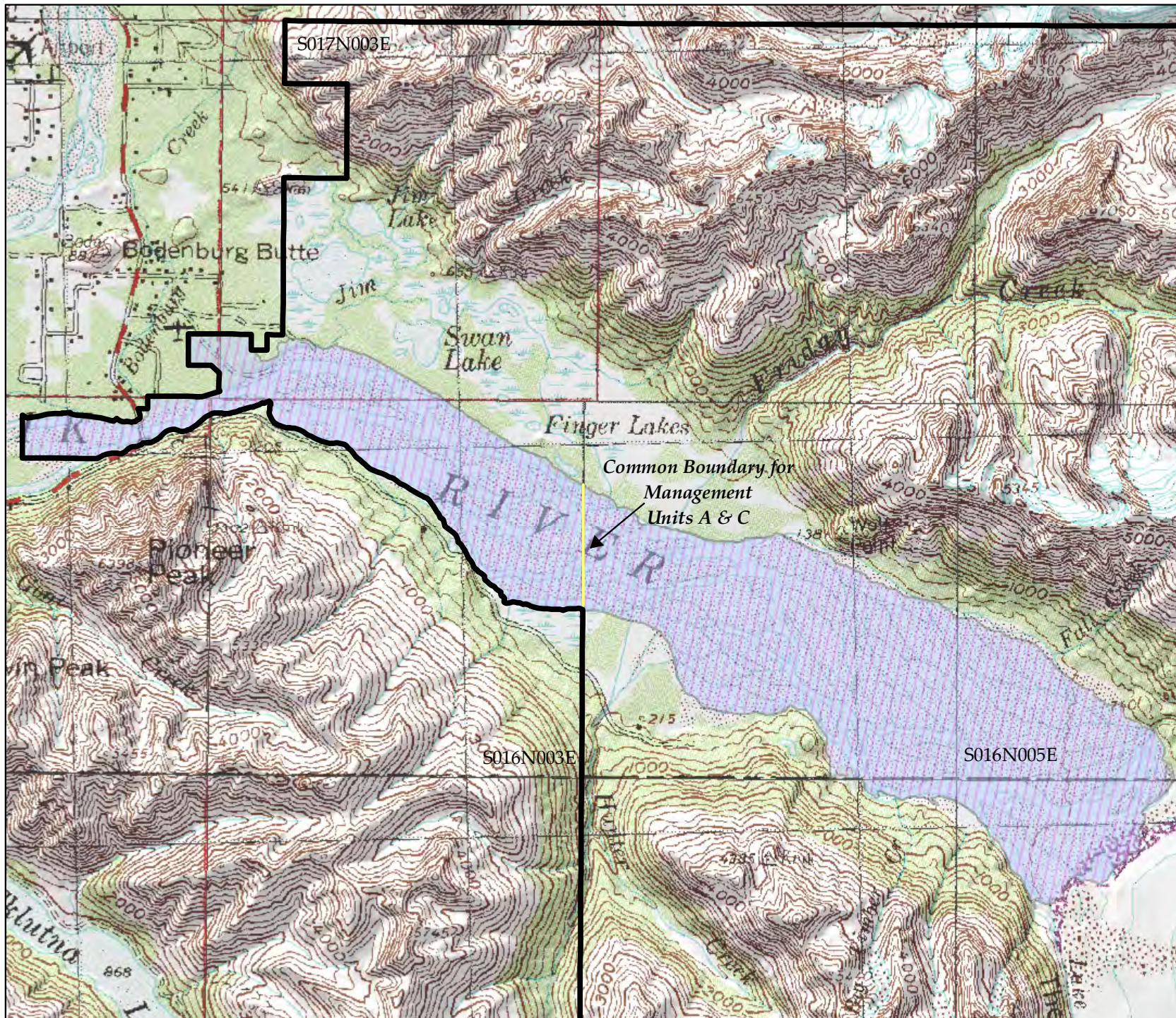


# Knik River Public Use Area

(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

## Forested Uplands & Un-vegetated Shorelands in Management Units A & C

-  KRPUA Planning Boundary
-  Managment Area



This map is for graphic representation only  
and is intended to be used only as a guide.  
Source documents remain the official record.

Coordinate System: NAD\_1983\_UTM\_Zone\_6N






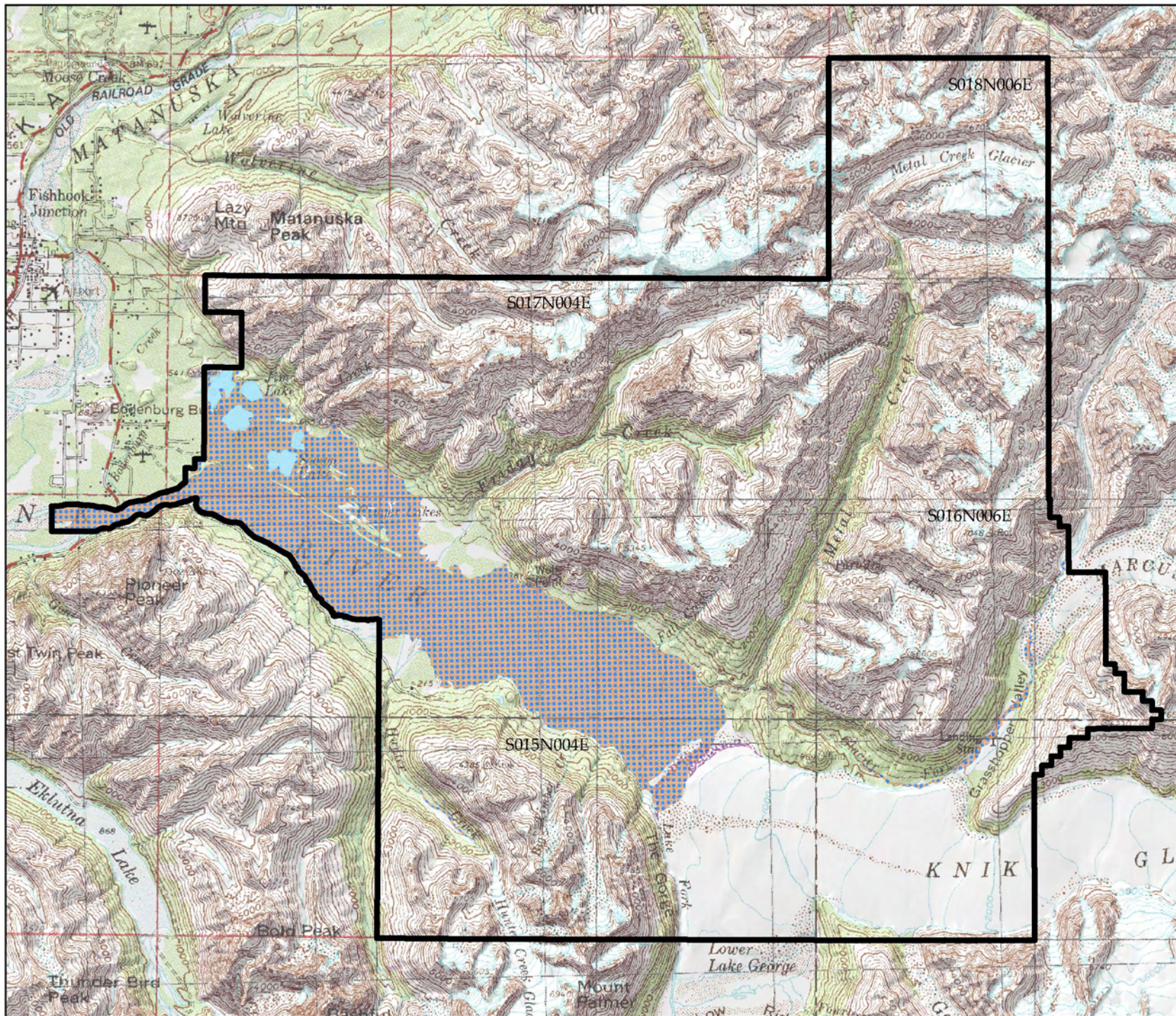


# Knik River Public Use Area

(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

## Wetlands Map 2-4

-  KRPUA Legal Boundary
-  Hydric Soils
-  Lakes



This map is for graphic representation only  
and is intended to be used only as a guide.  
Information derived from USDA & USFWS data.  
Source documents remain the official record.

Coordinate System: NAD\_1983\_UTM\_Zone\_6N

0 1.5 3 6 9 12  
Miles



## **Subsurface Resources**

### **Background**

#### **Oil and Gas Resources**

The area is almost entirely in the Chugach Mountains and dominated by outcrop of Cretaceous Valdez Group and McHugh Complex with a belt of diorite, granodiorite and metamorphosed rocks along the northern boundary. These rocks are not considered to have oil and gas potential at this time. There is a very small chance for gas potential in Tertiary Kenai Group rocks in a portion of the western half of Township 17N Range 3E and the northern part of Township 16N Range 2E. This could conceivably involve coal bed methane, tight gas sands or other unconventional gas resources at shallow depths and small potential gas volumes. However, this information is inconclusive since there are no oil and gas wells in the area and no surface outcrops of the Kenai Group have been mapped there.

The Cook Inlet Areawide Oil and Gas Lease Sale boundary does not include the public use area. State land, with few exceptions, is subject to oil and gas exploration and development, either through areawide leasing under AS 38.05.180 or by exploration licensing under AS 38.05.131. It should be noted that mineral closing orders under AS 38.05.185 do not apply to oil and gas exploration and leasing, nor do they preclude reasonable surface access to these resources. However, rights reserved under AS 38.05.125 may not be exercised until provision is made for payment for all damages sustained by the land owner (AS 38.05.130). In addition, geophysical exploration permits issued under 11 AAC 96 will conform to the maximum extent possible with the management guidelines in the plan, but are not prohibited.

Decisions regarding leasing for oil and gas and other energy resources will not be addressed in this plan. Oil and gas lease sales are specifically not subject to this planning process and follow the requirements of AS 38.05.180.

#### **Coal Resources**

Coal resources may be located in the western portion of the PUA however they are poor quality and not presently found in commercial quantities. Development of these resources is therefore unlikely.

#### **Locatable Minerals**

Locatable minerals (gold, silver, copper, and others) may be found in the eastern portion of the PUA, primarily in the Metal Creek drainage. There are 32 active mining claims in the area of Metal Creek. State land in the PUA is open to mineral entry but mining has not occurred outside of the Metal Creek drainage due to the sparse occurrence of locatable minerals. Expansion of the current area of the Mineral Closing Order is not considered appropriate.

## **Goal**

- Provide for the development of subsurface resources while protecting recreation, fish and wildlife and the habitats that they depend upon.

## **Management Guidelines**

Because of the low potential for the area to contain locatable minerals, additional closures to mineral entry are not proposed at this time. Nonetheless, all current mineral closing and leasehold location orders will remain and the following management guidelines apply.

- Authorizations issued by DNR shall include stipulations to minimize impacts to fish and wildlife, their habitats, and recreational uses. Access to recreational areas shall not be impaired.
- Subsurface authorizations issued by DNR should, where possible, ensure that such activities are not conducted in high-use recreation areas. Timing restrictions should be considered in these authorizations. Access to recreational areas shall not be impaired.
- Mining operations should be conducted in such a manner that prevents unnecessary and undue degradation of the land and water resources.
- Areas of mining operations, including placer mining, shall be reclaimed consistent with the requirements of DNR. Materials sales, land use permits and plans of operation will specify measures necessary to return land used in mining operations to a useful condition. In habitat areas, annual reclamation will be required concurrent with mining or material extraction.

# Trails

## Background

DNR will initiate a Trails Management Process (TMP) to identify existing trails, and assess the level of impact on resources. DNR will consult with ADF&G to assess the level of impact to fish, wildlife and their habitat related to recreational use. The TMP will also identify where additional trails are needed to enhance recreational user opportunities or reduce impacts to fisheries and wildlife habitat. The initial phase of this process will address trails in vegetated areas within the Lower Knik Flats and Lakes and Wetlands units. The second phase will address trails in the remaining units.

## Goal

- Maintain and enhance recreational opportunities while protecting fish, wildlife and their habitats.

## Management Guidelines

- Through the TMP, DNR will provide an inventory of trails, and provide an assessment of trail conditions. This assessment will identify existing trails that may have significant impacts on fish and wildlife habitat, particularly within waterfowl nesting areas, fish spawning and rearing areas, moose calving concentration areas, and nesting areas for trumpeter swans or loons. Trails in wetland areas, or other sensitive areas will be assessed to determine if they are having an unacceptable level of impact on the wetlands. Trails impacting other state resources will also be assessed.
- Based on those assessments, existing trails determined to be negatively impacting fish, wildlife, habitat, or other state resources may be closed, re-routed, or have another use or time restriction.
- DNR will identify potential new trails (non-motorized and motorized) for development and identify existing trails consistent with this plan that can be developed to a higher standard or expanded. Trails may also be identified for reservation as public easements for specific purposes.
- Not all existing routes within the PUA will be identified as a trail. Routes resulting from single vehicle passage or infrequent use by highway and off-highway vehicles may not be identified as a trail by DNR.
- Individuals may nominate new trails and DNR may accept applications and adjudicate applications to develop new trails or to re-route, or expand existing trails. DNR will reserve easements on trails developed with an authorization.

- DNR may consider Trail Management Agreements with organizations or individuals for the maintenance of trails or segments of trails.
- When siting a new trail or re-routing an existing trail adjacent to an anadromous waterbody DNR will consider the impact associated with the use of that trail on the waterbody.
- All trails (new and up-graded, expanded or re-routed) or facilities within the planning area should be sited and designed to avoid impacts to fish and wildlife and their habitats. If impacts to these habitats cannot be avoided, they should be minimized.
- All trails and developed facilities should be sited and developed to minimize impacts to anadromous waterbodies. Stream crossings should be developed generally perpendicular to the stream flow.
- Within 100 feet of an anadromous waterbody, excluding the Knik River and shorelands of the Knik River, trails should not be developed parallel to the ordinary high water mark. See Figure 1-1, page 1 - 9 for a depiction of state shorelands.
- New trails proposed within or adjacent to waterfowl nesting habitat, fish spawning and rearing areas, moose calving concentration areas, or swan or loon nesting areas should be sited and developed to avoid impacts to these areas. If these identified sensitive areas cannot be avoided, the impacts to these areas should be minimized.
- Following standard SCRO procedures for adjudication of easements, the public will be allowed to review and comment on recommendations involving the establishment of easements.



## Waterbodies

### Background

Waterbodies provide important habitat for fish and wildlife. The productive fish spawning and rearing habitat contributes to the upper Cook Inlet commercial fishery and supports a popular coho salmon fishery. Waterbodies are used by motorized and non-motorized users for recreation, hunting and fishing and as access to other areas.

Conflicts between users of waterbodies exist at some locations. Many users indicated that a potentially dangerous situation exists between motorized and non-motorized boaters on McRoberts Creek, due to limited sight distances and narrow stream channels. Another site where user conflicts occur is at Manmade Lake. This small waterbody is frequently used for family oriented recreation, primarily swimming. Use of motorized vehicles or boats on this small waterbody presents a safety hazard for swimmers.

Members of the public commented on uses occurring on Jim Lake. During ice-free periods, Jim Lake is typically used for non-motorized recreation, however, limited motorized boating use does occur and is primarily related to access for fishing and hunting. Watercraft typically operating on Jim Lake includes canoes, kayaks, and small boats with low horsepower motors. The wetlands connected to Jim Lake have been identified as sensitive waterfowl nesting habitat and provide habitat for duck and grebe nesting.

### Goal

- Provide for the continued use of waterbodies while avoiding/minimizing impacts to resources and providing for the safety of the recreating public.

### Management Guideline

- Use of waterbodies should be unrestricted unless that use is determined by DNR to be significantly impacting fish and wildlife or their habitats, public safety or to provide or maintain a certain recreational experience.
- DNR should propose regulations to address safety concerns on a segment of McRoberts Creek and on Manmade Lake.
- DNR should draft regulations to maintain current recreational opportunities and protect loon, duck and grebe nesting on Jim Lake and the connected wetlands.
- DNR should consult with ADF&G to determine if uses are impacting fish, wildlife and their habitats.
- If a use is found to have significant negative impacts as determined by DNR, it should be restricted or prohibited.

### **Chapter 3: Management Guidelines, Recommendations, and Public Use Sites for Each Management Unit**

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## **Chapter 3: Management Guidelines, Recommendations, and Public Use Sites for each Management Unit**

### **Introduction**

The PUA consists of approximately 208,261 acres of state land. The state land has been subdivided into eight management units. Map 3-1 depicts the management units for the PUA. Management units were delineated based on recreational use patterns and topographic similarities.

This chapter provides a detailed description of the management units including the uses occurring within them as well as their resources (recreation, wildlife, habitat, minerals, cultural/historical). The chapter also includes management guidelines and recommendations for management and facilities. The information for each unit follows the format provided below.

This chapter also provides recommendations for the management of adjacent general state land and adjacent borough land. These recommendations are discretionary for lands that are not state owned. They are provided as a framework for consistent management approaches between two public entities.

### **Unit Description**

Unit descriptions include background information on land status, access, use, fish and wildlife habitat, facilities, trails and easements, and cultural and historical resources. The Unit Description also discusses issues that are affecting management.

### **Management Intent**

The management intent provides a desired future condition for each of the units consistent with the purposes of the PUA. Specific management guidelines and recommendations follow the management intent.

### **Management Guidelines**

Consistent with the intent for the unit, management guidelines direct the current and future management decisions by DNR. Management guidelines involve specific courses of action that are consistent with and are necessary to the implementation of the management intent of the unit. Together with management intent, they represent DNR's management policy. Certain guidelines necessary to implement the plan will be adopted as regulation (see Appendix C for regulations that have been adopted for the PUA and for regulations that will be necessary to implement the plan).

**Management Recommendations**

Management recommendations identify additional actions DNR *may* take to implement the plan. These include recommendations pertaining to development of roads and trails or stream crossings and land acquisition.

**Facilities Recommendations**

Facilities recommendations are described in certain areas of the management units. DNR may develop them as funding allows or facilitate third party requests to develop them on a case-by-case basis. Facilities are recommended in areas where they will maintain and enhance uses. Facilities are also recommended to minimize the impacts of users on fish and wildlife and their habitats.

**Public Use Sites**

Recommendations for public use sites, or areas for which a specific management direction or use is provided, are included. These areas will receive a high level of management direction by DNR since they are associated with higher levels of public use.











# Knik River Public Use Area

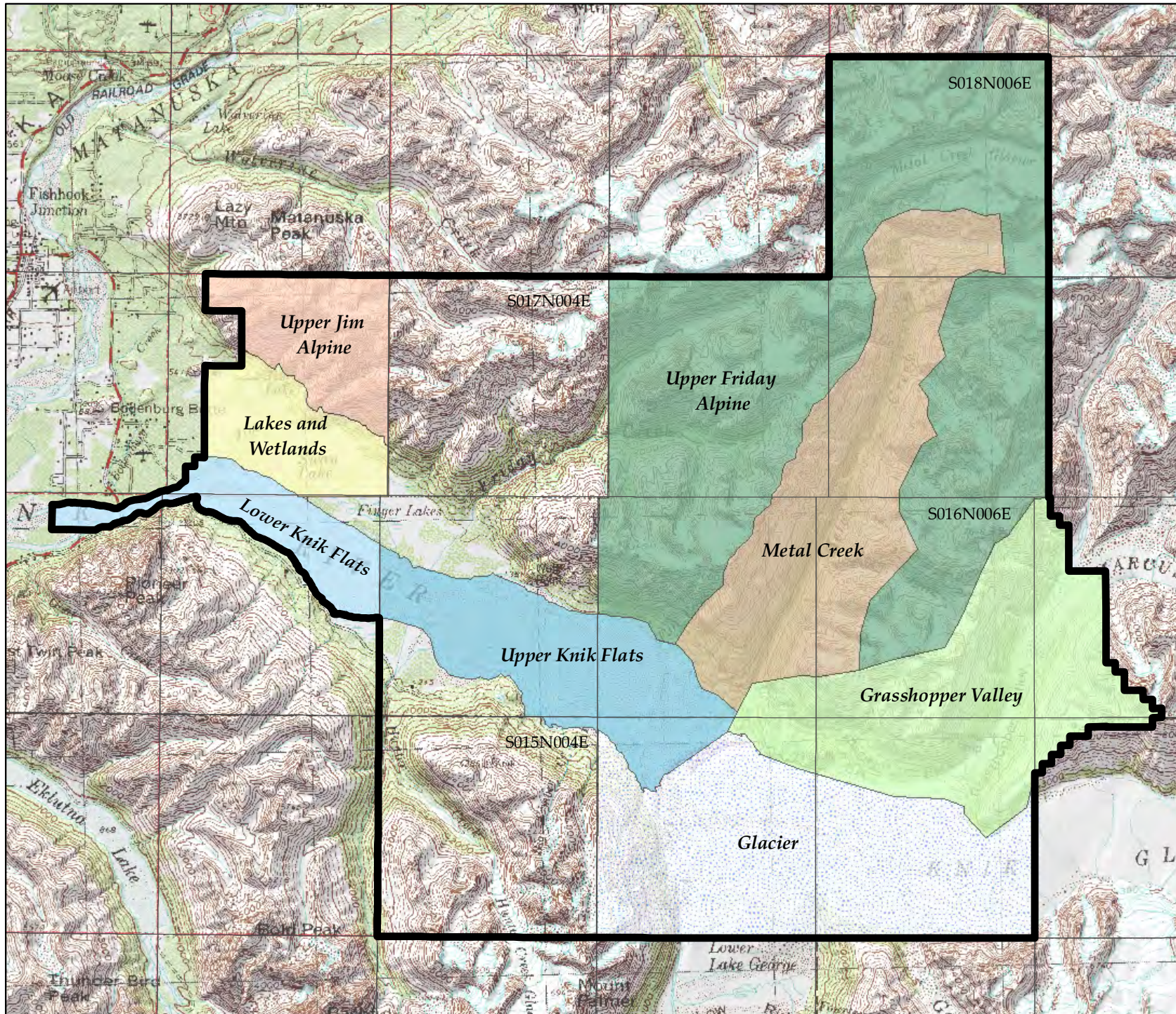
(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

## Management Units

 KRPUA Legal Boundary

### Management Units

-  Unit A: Lower Knik Flats
-  Unit B: Lakes and Wetlands
-  Unit C: Upper Knik Flats
-  Unit D: Upper Jim Alpine
-  Unit E: Upper Friday Alpine
-  Unit F: Grasshopper Valley
-  Unit G: Glacier
-  Unit H: Metal Creek



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and is intended to be used only as a guide.  
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Coordinate System: NAD\_1983\_UTM\_Zone\_6N



## Unit A – Lower Knik Flats

### **Unit Description**

This unit encompasses both state and private lands in the vicinity of the Old Glenn Highway Bridge. It extends from approximately two miles west of the Old Glenn Bridge to the eastern boundary of Township 16N, Range 3E. It is bounded by the OHWM of the Knik River on the south, and the north side of the Knik Glacier Trail (RST 17) on the north. The dominant feature of this unit is the extensive “flats” that are composed of the exposed bed of the Knik River. The confluence of Jim Creek and the Knik River is within this unit. See Map 3-1, *Knik River Management Plan Units* page 3 - 3.

### **Land Ownership**

There are approximately 7,686 acres of state land and 5 acres of private land within this unit. See Map 1-2 on page 1 - 5 for generalized land status of the planning area and surrounding lands.

### **Access**

The Sexton and Envy trails and the Knik Glacier Trail (RST 17) provide the primary access from adjacent MSB, private, federal and state land. Many users access the PUA from the north end of the Old Glenn Bridge. Access on the south side of the Knik River is provided by state shoreland, federal land within PLO 3324 and one 17(b) easement. There are numerous other user-created trails that provide access into and through this unit. The Knik River provides boat access to this and other units. Airplanes may access this on the unvegetated gravel bars of the river.

### **Recreational Use**

This unit receives the highest levels of use in the planning area. Moderate to high levels of use occurs in this unit year-round, but primarily on weekends. Both non-motorized and motorized use occurs; however, the majority of recreational use is motorized.

Non-motorized uses in the unit include hiking, fishing, boating, camping, wildlife viewing, horseback riding, biking, swimming and hunting. This unit is the gateway for many users to access units to the east. When ice and snow conditions permit, the area receives a variety of uses including snowshoeing, winter biking, and skiing. Non-motorized boating occurs during the ice-free periods on the Knik River and Jim Creek. Floating the Knik River from the glacier is uncommon because of difficult access to the headwaters. Canoes and rafts routinely put in at access points along Knik River Road and float down to takeouts at the New and Old Glenn bridges. Non-motorized watercraft includes canoes, kayaks and rafts.

Motorized uses include highway and OHV operation as a means of access for fishing, hunting, trapping, camping, wildlife viewing, photography, and for recreation. Motorized boat use is common on the Knik River. OHV use occurs primarily on the numerous trails

near the Pavilion Parking, the unvegetated gravel bars of the Knik River, and the Knik Glacier Trail (RST 17). During winter months frozen ground conditions allow for increased motorized recreational opportunities and access. Motorized boating primarily occurs on the Knik River and Jim Creek during ice-free periods. Typical vessels include motorboats, jetboats and airboats. Limited airboat use occurs throughout the year. Motorized boating use increases during the fishing and hunting seasons.

### **Fisheries Habitat**

The Knik River is the primary waterbody in this unit; however, Jim Creek is important as the gateway into the Lakes and Wetlands Unit and is a popular fishing destination. The Knik River provides habitat for resident fish species and is catalogued by ADF&G as an anadromous stream. Coho, sockeye and chum salmon are present and coho salmon spawn in portions of the Knik River. See Appendix B, Map B-1, *Anadromous Streams and Waterbodies* for a depiction of those streams included in ADF&G's catalogue of waters important for the spawning, rearing, or migration of anadromous fish.

### **Wildlife Habitat**

Habitat consists of forested areas of uplands, dunes, and forested wetlands in the northern portion of the unit adjacent to the flats. Habitat in the flats includes both vegetated and unvegetated areas of state shorelands adjacent to the numerous braids, sloughs and abandoned channels of the Knik River. Habitat in the unit is used for cover and forage for many wildlife species.

Migratory waterfowl utilize the water of the Knik River and adjacent shorelands as a stopover during their spring and fall migrations. Habitat for nesting and brooding is limited. Many types of both game and non-game species of waterfowl can be found. See Appendix B, Map B-2 for waterfowl habitat and nesting habitat.

Large and small game species utilize available habitat. Moose utilize habitat primarily for over-wintering, however, use outside of winter also occurs. Bear habitat encompasses the entire unit. Small game species such as snowshoe hare and spruce grouse can be found in the vegetated areas. See Appendix B, Map B-3, *Moose Habitat*.

### **Commercial Use**

This unit receives moderate amounts of commercial use, primarily as access to other units in the Public Use Area. Currently, no land use authorizations for temporary or permanent commercial facilities have been issued by DNR in this unit. Commercial uses include OHV, jetboat, flightseeing, and airboat tours. Hunting and fishing guides may operate in this unit.

### **Facilities**

The only developed facility is the Old Glenn Highway Bridge.



### **Trails and Easements**

Numerous trails exist in the Lower Knik Flats Unit. The primary trails in this unit are the Knik Glacier Trail (ADL 223176) and the Sexton and Envy trails. The Knik Glacier Trail is a state recognized RS 2477 and is identified as RST 17. This trail provides access through and within the northern portion of the unit. The portion of the Knik Glacier Trail that crosses Eklutna Inc. lands has a 17(b) easement (EIN no. 45) to provide for public access. The Sexton and Envy trails provide access from the Pavilion Parking area on Sullivan Road to the Knik River. A large number of user-created trails exist within this unit.

### **Cultural and Historical**

Resources related to Native cultures and early non-native settlement may be present. Early accounts of Native cultures have indicated that a village site was located in the western portion of the unit. This site was abandoned after glacial outburst flooding from the Knik Glacier. Remains of another structure related to early non-native settlement exists just outside of the eastern boundary. Artifacts related to occupancy and use of the structure may be located in the area.

### **Issues**

The primary issues are the unlawful activities, high levels of use, and trespass on private land that is occurring.

This unit receives a high level of use that is unlawful or that constitutes a threat to public safety. This type of use is facilitated by the relative ease of access to this unit from the Old Glenn Highway Bridge and the Sexton and Envy trails. Difficulty in accessing the PUA by two wheel drive patrol cars has hampered efforts to increase law enforcement patrols. Dangerous and/or reckless discharge of firearms, destruction of private and public property, and the wrecking and burning of automobiles are a few of the major problems identified by the public. Many users have indicated that they do not feel safe recreating while individuals are shooting in the area of trails. Several individuals indicated they had people unknowingly shooting at them while they were recreating. Several others indicated that they have had bullets fired into residences or private property adjacent to the PUA. Many members of the public cited a lack of law enforcement in the area as a major issue.

The second issue affecting management in this unit is the high levels of use, primarily west of Jim Creek. Because of the ease of access to this unit and its close proximity to the major population centers of Alaska and the community of Butte; this unit receives the highest levels of use. The majority of users access this unit by means of motorized highway and off-highway vehicles. Many users of this area recreate with OHV's on the numerous user-created trails developed in forest and dune areas as well as on the shorelands of the Knik River. Land in this unit is highly valued by motorized users for recreation and access to adjacent units for hunting and fishing. The high level of use is

causing impacts to the existing trails in addition to displacing some users from those same trails. Some users suggested they are displaced from the area because of conflict with other user groups on trails. Others suggested that trail rutting and debris on the trails made them unusable for some methods of non-motorized travel.

There are other issues concerning this unit that apply to the entire public use area. These arewide issues are summarized in Chapter 2 rather than in every unit.

### **Management Intent**

The management intent for the Lower Knik Flats Unit is to manage for high levels of public use, particularly at proposed parking and camping areas. Recreational opportunities will be enhanced by applying management guidelines directed specifically to this unit and to the entire public use area. The unit will be managed to provide the full spectrum of public uses and increased use in the future, while minimizing impacts of use on fish and wildlife habitat and protecting public safety. Facilities are proposed to be constructed at key locations that will enhance the public's enjoyment of the area, protect public safety and minimize impacts on fish and wildlife habitat. DNR will address trail use impacts to identified sensitive fish and wildlife habitats through the TMP described in Appendix D.

It is intended that OHV and highway vehicle uses continue on the forested uplands adjacent to the Pavilion Parking area and on the unvegetated shorelands of the Knik River. See Map 2-3, page 2 - 35 for a depiction of this area. Increasing levels of such use are also considered appropriate. DNR has concluded that the continuation of these uses is appropriate in these areas and that rutting and ground disturbing impact from these uses have minimal and an acceptable level of impact on the identified area. The TMP will address potential impacts associated with use of trails in all other areas of the unit. Except for impacts related to rutting and ground disturbance, uses in the area described above remain subject to all local, state, and federal authorities for other impacts associated with their use.

DNR is committed to improve access from Sullivan Avenue to the lower flats. DNR will improve access into the PUA from Sullivan Ave. through road/trail upgrades, and/or new road construction. These access improvements will be a top priority of DNR because they will aid our enforcement strategy. These improvements will be reserved through easements, and they will provide needed access to law enforcement personnel and DNR staff.

### **Management Guidelines**

- The portions of the Sexton (ADL 230254) and Envy (ADL 230256) trails on state land will be surveyed and reserved as a public easement to DNR as multiple use trails.
- Motorized use on the waters of Manmade Lake will be prohibited during ice-free periods. Additionally, motorized use of the land within 100 feet of the shoreline of Manmade Lake will be seasonally restricted to no more than 10 miles per hour during ice free periods. See *Proposed Waterbody Restrictions*, Map 3-2, page 3 - 11.

- Develop a non-motorized trail from the area of the Pavilion Parking lot to the Knik River flats. DNR will explore available funding sources and will, in cooperation with local groups, work to secure this funding to identify a route and build this new trail for non-motorized users. The new trail will be reserved as a non-motorized easement to DNR.

### **Management Recommendations<sup>1</sup>**

- The portion of the Knik Glacier Trail (RST 17) between the Pavilion Parking area and the mouth of Jim Creek may be developed as a maintained road. If this occurs the upgraded portion of the road will be reserved as a public road easement. In addition, a parking area and sanitary facilities may be developed in the area of the mouth of Jim Creek.
- A maintained road may be developed from adjacent state land near the Pavilion Parking Area to the Knik River flats. The purpose of this road would be to provide access for public safety, enforcement and maintenance. This new road would not be open to the public for use.
- DNR should work with ADF&G to identify stream crossing locations that will minimize impacts to resources including fish and wildlife and to the recreating public.

### **Facilities Recommendations<sup>2</sup>**

- A camping facility may be developed near the proposed Jim Creek parking facility. This camping area would provide primitive camping sites, and should be located away from the confluence of Jim Creek and the Knik River.
- Sanitation facilities may be constructed in the area of the parking and/or camping facilities at Jim Creek. These facilities should consist of toilets, picnic tables, fire grates, and bear-resistant trash receptacle(s).
- Sanitation facilities should be constructed at Manmade Lake. Development of these facilities is dependant upon adequate staffing and funding for site planning and development.
- Time and use restrictions for facilities will be developed at the time they are constructed.
- A boat launch facility should be developed at either the Old Glenn Highway Bridge or in the location of Manmade Lake. Development of this facility is dependant upon adequate staffing and funding for site planning and development.

### **Public Use Sites**

No public use sites are established.

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<sup>1</sup> In the Recommendations that follow, the words “may,” “will,” and “should” are used. “Will” requires a management action by DNR; “should” indicates the intent to pursue a specific course of action given the availability of funds and the resolution of permitting issues. “May” means the same as “should.” See *Glossary* in Appendix A for a definition of terms.

<sup>2</sup> “Should” indicates the intent to pursue development of a facility subject to availability of funds and the resolution of permitting agencies.

**Land Use Designation**

All state land is co-designated Public Recreation and Wildlife Habitat. All state land will be retained in public ownership.

**Allowed/Prohibited Uses**

All land uses (including commercial recreation) may be authorized except for uses/activities that are designated as “prohibited” in Chapter 4, page 4 - 4. Uses may be allowed if they are consistent with the legislation, pertinent state laws, regulations, and management guidelines.

## INSET 1

Knik River

Seasonal  
Non-motorized Use  
(during ice-free periods)

Seasonal 10 mph Restriction  
on Motorized Use within  
100ft from Water's Edge  
(during ice-free periods)

Manmade Lake

KRPUA  
Legal Boundary

0 375 750 1,500  
Feet

## INSET 2

Mud Lake

Jim Lake

Seasonal  
10 hp Restriction  
on Watercraft  
(April 15 - August 9)

Gull Lake

Leaf Lake





0 0.25 0.5 1  
Miles

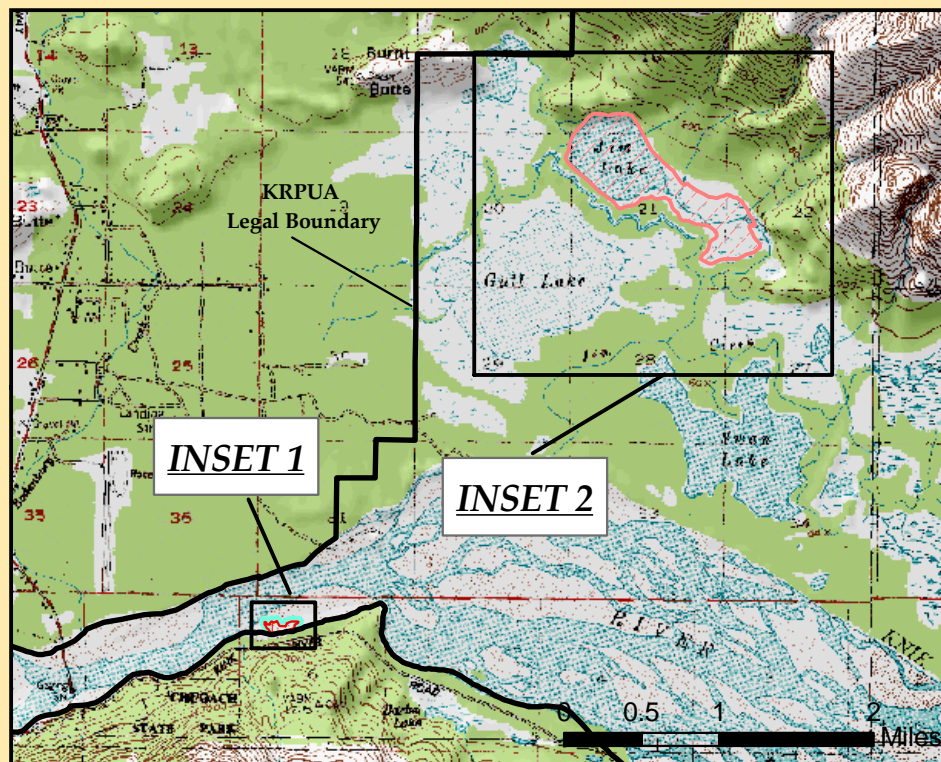
# Knik River Public Use Area

(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

## Proposed Waterbody Restrictions

### Map 3-2

-  KRPUA Legal Boundary
-  Seasonal 10 hp Watercraft Restriction
-  Seasonal Non-motorized Use
-  Seasonal 10 mph Motorized Restriction



This map is for graphic representation only  
and is intended to be used only as a guide.

Coordinate System: NAD\_1983\_UTM\_Zone\_6N

## Unit B – Lakes and Wetlands

### **Unit Description**

This unit encompasses both state and private lands located primarily south and east of Maud Road extension (ADL 206989) and the Rippy Trail. The northern boundary runs east and west along the 1000 foot elevation line at the base of the Chugach Mountains, while the southern boundary runs east and west along the north side of Knik Glacier Trail (RST-17). The dominant features of this unit consist of the extensive system of lakes, creeks, and wetlands including Mud, Jim, Gull, Leaf, and Swan lakes; and McRoberts and Jim creeks. See Map 3-1, *Knik River Management Plan Units* page 3 - 3.

### **Land Ownership**

There are approximately 7,725 acres of state land and 400 acres of private land in this unit. See Map 1-2 on page 1 - 5 for generalized land status of the planning area and surrounding lands.

### **Access**

Two major routes provide overland access from adjacent borough, private, federal and state land. The Maud Road extension (a 66-foot-wide easement, ADL 206989) and the Rippy Trail provide access in the northern portion. Access into the southern portion is provided by the Knik Glacier Trail. Jim Creek provides water access from the south.

### **Recreational Use**

This unit receives moderate levels of recreational use, although use levels vary. Use levels increase on weekends and during the fall fishing and hunting seasons. In these instances a high level of use is characteristic and it is likely that use levels will increase in the future. In winter, use increases when snow and ice conditions allow greater access. Because of the varied terrain, opportunities to view wildlife, and exceptional viewshed opportunities; Rippy Trail is a popular destination for both motorized and non-motorized users.

Non-motorized use occurs primarily along the Maud Road Extension, Rippy Trail and other user-created trails. Non-motorized users access the area for a wide variety of recreational opportunities including, hiking, biking, canoeing, wildlife viewing, horseback riding, hunting, and fishing. When ice and snow conditions permit, the numerous waterbodies and wetland areas receive a variety of uses including snowshoeing, biking, skating, and skiing. Non-motorized boating occurs on the expansive network of lakes and creeks. Jim and Mud lakes and Jim and McRoberts creeks are primary destinations for many of these users. Non-motorized watercraft include canoes, kayaks and rafts.

Motorized uses occur throughout this unit primarily to access the area for hunting, fishing, trapping, camping, wildlife viewing, photography, and other forms of recreation. Uses include OHV operation and boating. OHV use occurs primarily on the Maud Road Extension and Rippy Trail. Some OHV use also occurs in wetland areas adjacent to the Rippy Trail near Jim Lake; on wetlands on the south side of Swan Lake; and, on wetlands in the eastern portion of the unit near Friday Creek. During winter months frozen ground conditions allow for increased motorized recreational opportunities and access.

Motorized boating occurs on many of the waterbodies. Motorized use from the primitive launches at Jim and Mud lakes is typically by small watercraft with low horsepower. During the fall hunting and fishing seasons, larger watercraft are used on the lakes, streams, and wetlands. The launches at Jim and Mud lakes provide access to other waterbodies within the PUA. Motorized boating use increases during fishing and hunting seasons.

### **Fisheries Habitat**

Primary waterbodies in this unit include Jim, Mud, Gull, Swan and Leaf lakes; and Jim and McRoberts creeks. Waterbodies provide habitat for resident and anadromous fish species. Because of the diverse waterbodies and extensive wetlands this area is very productive fish spawning and rearing habitat. Coho salmon are present and/or spawning in all of the waterbodies in this unit. Sockeye salmon are present in Jim and McRoberts creeks and Jim Lake. See Appendix B, Map B-1 for a depiction of those streams and waterbodies included in ADF&G's catalogue of waters important for the spawning, rearing, or migration of anadromous fish.

### **Wildlife Habitat**

Habitat consists of expansive areas of lakes, wetlands and streams and forested uplands. The north edge of the unit is delineated by an abrupt transition zone between boreal forest and sub-alpine environments. The extensive wetland areas are interspersed with forested uplands. These uplands are remnant dunes formed after the Knik Glacier retreated. Because of the diversity of vegetation types and extensive wetlands, this unit is very productive wildlife habitat.

Waterfowl utilize the expansive lakes, creeks, and wetlands for resting and staging during their spring and fall migrations. Trumpeter swans frequent the open waters of Mud and Jim lakes in early spring prior to migrating to nesting areas elsewhere in Alaska. In the fall, large numbers of trumpeter swans return to the lakes and wetlands to rest prior to migrating to over-wintering habitat in Canada and the western United States. Many species of waterfowl utilize the habitat for nesting and brooding during spring and summer including many varieties of puddle ducks such as mallards, widgeons, and green-wing teals; diving ducks such as goldeneye, scaup and grebes. Trumpeter swans and loons are known to return annually to nest. See Appendix B, Map B-2 for waterfowl habitat.



Moose habitat ranges from the valley floor to the vegetated sub-alpine areas. Calving and rutting generally occurs in the sub-alpine and on the valley floor. A moose calving concentration area has been identified by ADF&G within this unit. Moose commonly over-winter in this area because of ample forage and minimal snow cover. See *Moose Habitat* Appendix B, Map B-3.

Dall sheep are generally found in the higher elevations but are consistently found at lower elevations at a few locations including by the outlet of Jim Creek Canyon. This area is known locally for its high densities of lambs and ewes, and is often characterized as a “lambling area.” See Appendix B, Map B-4 for sheep habitat.

Bears and wolves are occasionally seen and sometimes harvested in this unit. Small game species such as snowshoe hare and spruce grouse can be found in the vegetated areas.

### **Commercial Use**

This unit receives low to moderate amounts of commercial use from ATV and airboat tours. Currently, no land use authorizations for temporary or permanent commercial facilities have been issued by DNR in this unit. Hunting and fishing guides may operate in this unit.

### **Facilities**

Primitive recreational facilities include the parking and boat launch areas at Jim Lake.

### **Trails and Easements**

The Maud Road extension is located on an easement (ADL 206989) reserved to DNR. In addition to facilities developed on easements, a number of trails have been created by users of the area; most notably, the Rippy Trail which connects the Jim Lake parking area to the upper Jim Creek. Other user-created trails in this unit access areas adjacent to this unit within the Public Use Area.

### **Cultural and Historical**

Resources related to Native cultures and early non-native settlement may be located in this unit. Early accounts of Native cultures using the area describe a village site and a cabin site in this unit. The village site is located on a 160-acre Native allotment on the eastern shore of Swan Lake. The cabin site was used by a local native Alaskan while hunting and fishing in the Knik Valley. Remains of another structure and associated artifacts related to early non-native settlement exists in this unit as well.

### **Issues**

Issues that affect management in this unit include use of OHV's and airboats in waterbodies, wetlands, and adjacent areas and several trespass structures. Many individuals expressed concern that airboat and OHV use was negatively impacting habitat for waterfowl, wildlife, and spawning salmon. Many other individuals were interested in maintaining their opportunities to use airboats and OHV's for recreation and as a means

to access fish and game resources. Some individuals indicated that some forms of motorized recreation were negatively impacting their own recreational uses. Trespass structures in this unit are primarily “duck shacks” used by waterfowl hunters. These structures, once abandoned, become rundown and eventually end up as litter. They may also have the effect of displacing some recreational users from utilizing the area around them.

One of the primary access points occurs on an existing easement (Maude Road extension) on Eklutna Inc. uplands at Mud Lake. Currently the site has a primitive road and boat launch. It is unclear how much of the current developments are within the existing easement. The use of the easement increases during the hunting and fishing season, but is popular with other users throughout the summer and winter season. The area surrounding the easement on private land is heavily impacted related to use of the easement and adjacent state waterbody. A management agreement between Eklutna Inc. and DNR is necessary before DNR can address the impacts occurring on and adjacent to the easement. If an agreement can be made between the parties, DNR could develop management and facilities recommendations to address impacts associated with use of the easement and adjacent state waterbodies.

There are other issues concerning this unit that apply to the entire public use area. These areawide issues are summarized in Chapter 2 rather than in every unit.

### **Management Intent**

The management intent for the Lakes and Wetlands Unit is to manage for high levels of public use at proposed parking and camping areas, public use sites, and at other popular use areas associated with boat launches, shooting areas, and use of the Rippy Trail. The remainder of the unit will be managed for moderate levels of use. Recreational opportunities will be enhanced by applying management guidelines directed specifically to this unit and those that apply to the entire public use area. It will be managed to provide the full spectrum of public uses and increased use in the future, while minimizing impacts of use on fish and wildlife habitat and protecting public safety. Facilities are proposed to be constructed at key locations that will enhance the public’s enjoyment of the area, protect public safety and minimize impacts on fish and wildlife habitat. DNR will also address trail use impacts to identified sensitive fish and wildlife habitats through the TMP as described in Appendix D.

It is intended that DNR will work with ADF&G to monitor the swan population within this unit. If ADF&G concludes that the population of swans within the PUA is declining, DNR will work with ADF&G to identify potential causes and will develop appropriate strategies to address the decline.

### **Management Guidelines**

- DNR will work with ADF&G to monitor trumpeter swan populations within the PUA. Reviews should be conducted annually and should begin within 5 years from the adoption of this plan. Based on the results of this review, further management strategies may be developed.

- Areas for recreational shooting may be developed on the north side of the Maud Road extension, east of Mud Lake or in the forested areas east of the Pavilion Parking area. The area proposed for designation east of Mud Lake is currently used as a shooting area by the public. The proposed shooting areas are depicted on Map 2-1, page 2 - 17. Time of use or other restrictions will be determined by DNR.
- Maude Road extension should be upgraded.
- Implement an education and signage program to address safety concerns for both Jim and McRoberts creeks. Signs will be posted at major access points into the PUA depicting Jim and McRoberts creeks and will advise boaters of the sometimes narrow and winding nature of these waterbodies. Signs will contain information on the common types of watercraft, and seasonality of use. Additional signs may be posted at the major entry points to Jim and McRoberts creeks.
- Motorized access on Jim Lake and associated wetlands will be restricted to not more than 10 horsepower for watercraft seasonally from April 15 to August 9 annually. The 10hp restriction will be lifted beginning August 10 through April 14 annually. The area affected by this horse power restriction for watercraft is indicated in Map 3-2, page 3 - 11.
- Rippy Trail Development:
  - DNR will designate a multi-use (motorized and non-motorized) trail on the current Rippy Trail alignment extending from the Jim Lake parking area to the wetlands of Chain Lake, east of Jim Creek. The trail will include the commonly used spur routes that go to specific locations (i.e. campsites, scenic viewing opportunities, and hunting locations). The Rippy Trail will be upgraded to sustainable trail standards.
  - Vehicles with a curb weight of greater than 1,500 pounds are prohibited from using the Rippy Trail.
  - It is intended that a new non-motorized trail will be developed generally parallel and upslope of the existing Rippy Trail. Extensions of this new trail may be appropriate to access campsites, viewpoints, or to connect with other trails.

### **Management Recommendations**

- DNR will work with ADF&G, Habitat Division in the identification of anadromous stream crossings, the catalog process, and the general permits for stream crossings.
- DNR should work with interested parties to achieve the development and maintenance of recommended facilities within the management unit.
- DNR should consider the feasibility of road and trail improvements to enhance public use of the area, to consolidate general access impacts to the extent possible, and to provide for more efficient law enforcement efforts.
- DNR will order the removal of unauthorized structures.
- DNR may identify a possible area for a concession operator for camping area.

### **Facilities Recommendations**

- Jim Lake<sup>1</sup>
  - Facilities at the Jim Lake shoreline should be designed to maximize day use for multiple groups and users.
  - The primitive parking lot at Jim Lake may be upgraded to accommodate and facilitate parking for both the current and anticipated future levels of use. The parking facility should be designed to accommodate a wide variety of vehicles including vehicles with trailers. The parking facility should be located away from Jim Lake at or near its current location.
  - A camping area may be developed near the current primitive parking lot. Whether or not this camping area includes drive-in campsites or just walk-in sites will be determined at the design phase. The camping area should be located away from Jim Lake.
  - Sanitation facilities may be constructed in the area of the parking and camping area. These facilities should consist of vaulted toilets (or similar facilities), picnic tables, fire grates, and bear-resistant trash receptacles.
  - The access trail and launch at Jim Lake should be developed to accommodate typical highway vehicles and facilitate the launching of small watercraft at Jim Lake. The access should be sited to minimize impacts to habitat and wetlands. A primitive, hand-carried boat launch/dock may be developed to facilitate access to Jim Lake.

### **Public Use Sites**

Public use sites are designated for Jim Lake and Jim Creek as depicted on Map 2-2, page 2 - 29. These sites receive high levels of seasonal use. See Chapter 2 for management guidelines for public use sites.

### **Land Use Designation**

All state land is co-designated Public Recreation and Wildlife Habitat. All state land will be retained in public ownership.

### **Allowed/Prohibited Uses**

All land uses (including commercial recreation) may be authorized except for uses/activities that are designated as “prohibited” in Chapter 4, page 4 - 4. Uses may be allowed if they are consistent with the legislation, pertinent state laws, regulations, and management guidelines.

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<sup>1</sup> A more detailed site analysis will precede the development of proposed facilities at Jim Lake.

## Unit C – Upper Knik Flats

### **Unit Description**

This unit encompasses state and private lands from the terminus of the Knik Glacier downstream to Unit A. It includes all state shorelands in Township 16N, Range 4E, Seward Meridian as well as a small area of upland adjacent to the Knik River in Township 16N, Range 5E as depicted on Map 3-1, *Knik River Management Plan Units* page 3 - 3. The dominant features of this unit are the expansive areas of exposed shorelands referred to as the “flats” and the Knik River.

### **Land Ownership**

There are approximately 17,094 acres of state land within the Upper Knik Flats Unit. See Map 1-2 on page 1 - 5 for generalized land status of the planning area and surrounding lands.

### **Access**

Access is provided by the Knik Glacier Trail (RST 17), Knik River Road, Federal lands managed consistent with PLO 3324, and the Knik River itself. Some individuals utilize aircraft for access via a few un-maintained gravel airstrips. Portions of this unit are accessed by motorized and non-motorized users from the Knik Glacier Trail (RST 17) on adjacent federal land. The Knik Glacier is a primary destination for many of users.

### **Recreational Use**

This unit receives low to moderate use levels depending on season. Use levels are moderate during summer and fall and low to moderate during winter and spring. The Knik Glacier is the destination for many users of the Public Use Area.

Non-motorized use occurs at low levels throughout the year. Non-motorized users access the area for a wide variety of recreational opportunities including, hiking, boating, wildlife viewing, horseback riding, and hunting. When ice and snow conditions permit, the Knik River and Flats areas receive a variety of uses including snowshoeing, biking, and skiing. Non-motorized boating occurs during the ice-free periods on the Knik River. Non-motorized watercraft include canoes, kayaks, and rafts.

Motorized uses occur throughout this unit at low to moderate levels. Motorized users access this area for hunting and fishing as well as other forms of recreation. Uses include OHV operation and boating. OHV use occurs primarily on the Flats. During winter months frozen ground conditions allow for increased motorized recreational opportunities and access. Motorized boating occurs on the Knik River. Motorized boating use generally increases during the fishing and hunting seasons. Pilots often use the un-vegetated gravel bars for practice landings and takeoffs.

### **Fisheries Habitat**

The Knik River is the primary waterbody in this unit. The Knik River provides habitat for resident and anadromous fish species. Coho, sockeye and chum salmon are present and spawn in some portions of the river. See Appendix B, Map B-1 for a depiction of those streams included in ADF&G's catalogue of waters important for the spawning, rearing, or migration of anadromous fish.

### **Wildlife Habitat**

Wildlife habitat in the Upper Knik Flats Unit includes both vegetated and un-vegetated areas of state shorelands adjacent to the numerous braids, sloughs and abandoned channels of the Knik River. This unit also includes a small area of vegetated wetlands and uplands at the base of the mountains north and west of the glacier. This habitat is used for forage and cover for many wildlife species.

Migratory waterfowl utilize the water of the Knik River as a stopover during their spring and fall migrations. Habitat for nesting and brooding is limited on the Knik River. Many types of game and non-game species of waterfowl use available habitat during the ice-free periods. See Map B-2 for waterfowl habitat.

Large and small wildlife species utilize available habitat found in this unit. Moose utilize habitat primarily for over-wintering, however, use outside of winter also occurs. A moose calving concentration area has been identified near the terminus of the glacier. Bear habitat encompasses the entire unit. Small game species such as snowshoe hare and spruce grouse can be found in the vegetated areas. See wildlife habitat maps in Appendix B.

### **Commercial Use**

This unit receives low to moderate levels of commercial use. Upland adjacent to the Knik Glacier is the destination for many of the tours offered. Currently, two land use authorizations for a tour operator have been issued by DNR in this unit. Commercial uses include OHV, jetboat, flightseeing, and airboat tours. Hunting and fishing guides may operate in this unit.

### **Facilities**

Other than un-maintained airstrips and commercial operator facilities authorized by DNR, developed facilities do not exist in this unit.

### **Trails and Easements**

The Knik Glacier Trail (RST 17) crosses through a portion of this unit west of Metal Creek. Numerous user created trails exist in the vegetated wetlands and uplands and on the flats.

### **Cultural and Historical**

No cultural or historical artifacts or sites have been reported to date.

### **Issues**

The primary issue affecting management is the concentration of commercial and non-commercial use in a relatively small area in front of the Knik Glacier. Because the moraine in front of the glacier is a destination for many commercial and non-commercial users, there is a need to provide specific management of this area that is more restrictive than that allowed under the state's generally allowed uses. The use of firearms at this area of concentrated use has been identified by a number of individuals as a concern. Some users suggested the state should ensure safe use of the area by the public and commercial operators.

There are other issues concerning this unit that apply to the entire public use area. These arewide issues are summarized in Chapter 2 rather than in every unit.

### **Management Intent**

The management intent for the Upper Knik Flats Unit is to manage for high levels of public use at popular recreation areas that may develop over time. The remainder of the unit will be managed for moderate to high levels of use. Recreational opportunities will be enhanced by applying management guidelines directed specifically to this unit and those that apply to the entire public use area. It will be managed to provide the full spectrum of public uses and increased use in the future, while minimizing impacts of use on fish and wildlife habitat and protecting public safety. DNR will address trail use impacts to identified sensitive fish and wildlife habitats through the TMP described in Appendix D.

It is intended that OHV and highway vehicle uses continue on the forested uplands adjacent to the Pavilion Parking area and on the un-vegetated shorelands of the Knik River. See Map 2-3, page 2 - 35 for a depiction of this area. Increasing levels of such use are also considered appropriate. DNR has concluded that the continuation of these uses is appropriate in these areas and that rutting and ground disturbing impact from these uses have minimal and an acceptable level of impact on the identified area. The TMP will address potential impacts associated with use of trails in all other areas of the unit. Except for impacts related to rutting and ground disturbance, uses in the area described above remain subject to all local, state, and federal authorities for other impacts associated with their use.

### **Management Guidelines**

- (None)

### **Management Recommendations**

- (None)

### **Facilities Recommendations**

- (None)

### **Public Use Sites**

No public use sites are established.



**Land Use Designation**

All state land is co-designated Public Recreation and Wildlife Habitat. All state land will be retained in public ownership.

**Allowed/Prohibited Uses**

All land uses (including commercial recreation) may be authorized except for uses/activities that are designated as “prohibited” in Chapter 4, page 4 - 4. Uses may be allowed if they are consistent with the legislation, pertinent state laws, regulations, and management guidelines.

## Unit D – Upper Jim Alpine

### **Unit Description**

This unit boundary encompasses state lands within Township 17N, Range 3E, Seward Meridian, above the 1000 ft. contour line as depicted on Map 3-1, *Knik River Management Plan Units* page 3 - 3. The dominant feature of this unit is the rugged alpine of the Upper Jim Creek drainage.

### **Land Ownership**

There are approximately 9,402 acres of state land within the Upper Jim Alpine Unit. See Map 1-2 on page 1 - 5 for generalized land status of the planning area and surrounding lands.

### **Access**

Access is from adjacent state, federal, or lands owned by Eklutna Inc. Numerous user created trails originate from Maud Road, Maud Road Extension, and the Rippy Trail and provide access to the adjacent Upper Jim Alpine Unit.

### **Recreational Use**

This unit receives low levels of use primarily related to hunting, hiking, wildlife viewing, and climbing. No motorized use occurs in this unit.

### **Fisheries Habitat**

The headwaters of Jim Creek are the primary waterbodies in this unit. Habitat for resident fish species is absent. No waterbodies are catalogued by ADF&G as anadromous. See Appendix B, Map B-1 for a depiction of those streams and waterbodies included in ADF&G's catalogue of waters important for the spawning, rearing, or migration of anadromous fish.

### **Wildlife Habitat**

Wildlife habitat consists of sub-Alpine and Alpine environments. The lower elevations are forested while the higher elevations are rock and scree.

Dall sheep are commonly found in the vegetated sub-alpine to alpine environments. Ewes with lambs congregate in the area of Jim Creek Canyon. A mineral lick utilized by sheep and goats has been identified west of upper Jim Creek. Mountain goat habitat is located at the higher elevations. Moose utilize the alpine and sub-alpine habitat during snow-free periods for feeding and rearing. Bear habitat encompasses the entire unit. Small game species such as snowshoe hare, spruce grouse, and ptarmigan can be found in the vegetated areas. See wildlife habitat maps in Appendix B.

**Commercial Use**

Commercial use of the unit is unknown at this time. Currently, no land use authorizations for commercial operators have been issued by DNR in this unit. Hunting guides may operate in this unit.

**Facilities**

No facilities exist within this unit.

**Trails and Easements**

User-created trails exist; however, no developed or managed trails exist at this time.

**Cultural and Historical**

No cultural or historical artifacts or sites have been reported to date.

**Issues**

Because of the difficulty in access, there are few if any issues affecting management. Low levels of non-motorized use and no motorized use occurs in the unit.

There are other issues concerning this unit that apply to the entire public use area. These areawide issues are summarized in Chapter 2 rather than in every unit.

**Management Intent**

The management intent for the Upper Jim Alpine Unit is to manage for low levels of public use and to enhance recreational opportunities by applying management guidelines that apply to the entire public use area. The unit will be managed with an emphasis on enhancing non-motorized opportunities, while mitigating impacts to habitats for fish and wildlife.

**Management Guidelines**

- (None)

**Management Recommendations**

- A non-motorized hiking trail(s) may be developed to connect the trail system in Wolverine Valley with trails in the Knik River drainage. This trail would be reserved as a non-motorized easement.

**Facilities Recommendations**

- (None)

**Public Use Sites**

No public use sites are established.

**Land Use Designation**

All state land is co-designated Public Recreation and Wildlife Habitat. All state land will be retained in public ownership.

**Allowed/Prohibited Uses**

All land uses (including commercial recreation) may be authorized except for uses/activities that are designated as “prohibited” in Chapter 4, page 4 - 4. Uses may be allowed if they are consistent with the legislation, pertinent state laws, regulations, and management guidelines.

## Unit E – Upper Friday Alpine

### **Unit Description**

This unit encompasses state lands within Township 16N, Range 5 & 6E, Township 17N, Range 5 & 6E, and Township 18N, Range 6E, Seward Meridian as depicted on Map 3-1, *Knik River Management Plan Units* page 3 - 3. The dominant feature of this unit is the rugged alpine of the Upper Friday and Metal creeks drainages.

### **Land Ownership**

There are approximately 76,014 acres of state land within the Upper Friday Alpine Unit. See Map 1-2 on page 1 - 5 for generalized land status of the planning area and surrounding lands.

### **Access**

The Knik Glacier Trail (RST 17) provides access adjacent to this unit. A few user created trails provide access from the Knik Glacier Trail (RST 17). Four un-maintained gravel airstrips are located in this unit.

### **Recreational Use**

This unit receives low levels of use primarily related to hunting, hiking, wildlife viewing, and climbing. Motorized use does not occur with the exception of the airplane use of airstrips.

### **Fisheries Habitat**

Tributaries of Metal Creek and the headwaters of Friday Creek are the primary waterbodies. Fisheries habitat is absent. No waterbodies are catalogued by ADF&G as anadromous. See Appendix B, Map B-1 for a depiction of those streams and waterbodies included in ADF&G's catalogue of waters important for the spawning, rearing, or migration of anadromous fish.

### **Wildlife Habitat**

Wildlife habitat consists of sub-Alpine and Alpine environments. The lower elevations are forested while the higher elevations are rock and scree.

Dall sheep are commonly found from the vegetated sub-alpine to alpine environments. Mountain goat habitat is located at the higher elevations. Moose utilize the alpine and sub-alpine habitat during snow-free periods for feeding and rearing. Bear habitat encompasses the entire unit. Small game species such as snowshoe hare, spruce grouse, and ptarmigan can be found in the vegetated areas. See wildlife habitat maps in Appendix B.

**Commercial Use**

This unit receives low levels of commercial use. Currently, two land use authorizations have been issued by DNR for commercial guide camp facilities.

**Facilities**

Other than the un-maintained airstrips, facilities do not exist.

**Trails and Easements**

A few user-created trails exist; however, no developed or managed trails exist at this time.

**Cultural and Historical**

No cultural or historical artifacts or sites have been reported to date.

**Issues**

Because of the difficulty in access, few if any issues affect management. With the exception of the airstrips, this unit currently experiences no motorized use and little non-motorized use.

There are other issues concerning this unit that apply to the entire public use area. These arewide issues are summarized in Chapter 2 rather than in every unit.

**Management Intent**

The management intent for the Upper Friday Alpine Unit is to manage for low levels of public use and to enhance recreational opportunities by applying management guidelines that apply to the entire public use area. The unit will be managed with an emphasis on enhancing non-motorized opportunities, while mitigating impacts to habitats for fish and wildlife.

**Management Guidelines**

- (None)

**Management Recommendations**

- (None)

**Facilities Recommendations**

- (None)

**Public Use Sites**

No Public Use Sites have been identified.

**Land Use Designation**

All state land is co-designated Public Recreation and Wildlife Habitat. All state land will be retained in public ownership.

**Allowed/Prohibited Uses**

All land uses (including commercial recreation) may be authorized except for uses/activities that are designated as “prohibited” in Chapter 4, page 4 - 4. Uses may be allowed if they are consistent with the legislation, pertinent state laws, regulations, and management guidelines.



## Unit F – Grasshopper Valley

### **Unit Description**

This unit encompasses state lands within Township 15N, Range 5, 6, and 7E, Township 16N, Range 5, 6, & 7E, and Township 17N, Range 5 & 6E, Seward Meridian as depicted on Map 3-1, *Knik River Management Plan Units* page 3 - 3. The dominant feature of this unit is Grasshopper Valley and surrounding alpine areas.

### **Land Ownership**

There are approximately 29,394 acres of state land within Unit F. See Map 1-2 on page 1 - 5 for generalized land status of the planning area and surrounding lands.

### **Access**

Few user created trails related to hunting exist in Grasshopper Valley. Seven un-maintained gravel airstrips are located within Grasshopper Valley Unit.

### **Recreational Use**

This unit receives low levels of use primarily related to hunting, hiking, wildlife viewing, and climbing. Motorized use occurs primarily on the airstrips.

### **Fisheries Habitat**

Glacier Fork Knik River is the primary waterbody. Habitat for resident fish species may occur. No waterbodies are catalogued by ADF&G as anadromous. See Appendix B, Map B-1 for a depiction of those streams and waterbodies included in ADF&G's catalogue of waters important for the spawning, rearing, or migration of anadromous fish.

### **Wildlife Habitat**

Wildlife habitat extends from the sparsely vegetated valley floor to the un-vegetated alpine.

Dall sheep are commonly found from the vegetated sub-alpine to alpine environments. Mountain goat habitat is located at the higher elevations. Moose utilize available habitat from the valley floor to the alpine and sub-alpine. Bear habitat encompasses the entire unit. Small game species such as snowshoe hare and ptarmigan can be found. See wildlife habitat maps in Appendix B.

### **Commercial Use**

This unit receives low levels of commercial use.

### **Facilities**

Other than a few un-maintained airstrips, facilities do not exist.

### **Trails and Easements**

A few user-created trails exist; however, no developed or managed trails exist at this time.

### **Cultural and Historical**

No cultural or historical artifacts or sites have been reported to date.

### **Issues**

Because of the difficulty in access, there are few if any issues affecting management. With the exception of the airstrips, this unit currently experiences low levels of motorized use and low levels of non-motorized use. DNR does expect use to increase as the glacier recedes and access to the unit improves. This increased access related to glacial retreat is not expected for some years to come.

There are other issues concerning this unit that apply to the entire public use area. These arewide issues are summarized in Chapter 2 rather than in every unit.

### **Management Intent**

The management intent for the Grasshopper Valley Unit is to manage for low levels of public use and to enhance recreational opportunities by applying management guidelines that apply to the entire public use area. The unit will be managed to provide the full spectrum of public uses, while mitigating impacts to habitats for fish and wildlife.

### **Management Guidelines**

- (None)

### **Management Recommendations**

- A single multiple use sustainable trail may be developed into Grasshopper Valley. This trail will be adjudicated by DNR and reserved as a public easement.

### **Facilities Recommendations**

- (None)

### **Public Use Sites**

No public use sites are established.

### **Land Use Designation**

All state land is co-designated Public Recreation and Wildlife Habitat. All state land will be retained in public ownership.

### **Allowed/Prohibited Uses**

All land uses (including commercial recreation) may be authorized except for uses/activities that are designated as “prohibited” in Chapter 4, page 4 - 4. Uses may be allowed if they are consistent with the legislation, pertinent state laws, regulations, and management guidelines.

## Unit G – Glacier

### **Unit Description**

This unit encompasses state lands within Township 15N, Range 5 & 6E, and Township 16N, Range 5E, Seward Meridian as indicated on Map 3-1, *Knik River Management Plan Units* page 3 - 3. The dominant feature of this unit is the Knik Glacier and surrounding alpine areas.

### **Land Ownership**

There are approximately 32,046 acres of state land within the Glacier Unit. See Map 1-2 on page 1 - 5 for generalized land status of the planning area and surrounding lands.

### **Access**

Access is possible from adjacent state and federal lands as well as from the Knik River.

### **Recreational Use**

This unit receives low levels of recreational use related to hiking, climbing, and recreation with snowmobiles and OHV's.

### **Fisheries Habitat**

Lake Fork Knik River is the primary waterbody. Habitat for resident fish species may occur in this unit. The Knik River is catalogued by ADF&G as an anadromous stream. Coho salmon are present in the Lake Fork Knik River. See Appendix B, Map B-1 for a depiction of those streams and waterbodies included in ADF&G's catalogue of waters important for the spawning, rearing, or migration of anadromous fish.

### **Wildlife Habitat**

Because this unit is dominated by the Knik Glacier, there is little habitat for wildlife other than uplands west of the glacier. These uplands provide summer rearing and browsing habitat for moose as well as habitat for sheep and goats. Bear habitat encompasses the entire unit. See wildlife habitat maps in Appendix B.

### **Commercial Use**

Low levels of commercial use occur in this unit.

### **Facilities**

There are no facilities within this unit.

### **Trails and Easements**

No trails or easements exist within this unit.

### **Cultural and Historical**

No cultural or historical artifacts or sites have been reported to date.

### **Issues**

Lake George has been receiving increased use by commercial and non-commercial pilots causing some additional dispersed recreational use to the south of this area. Over time this use may migrate north into the Glacier Unit. Another issue identified by the public was increased access related to the receding glacier. Although the glacier may be receding, it is doubtful that use patterns will dramatically change before the current plan is amended or revised.

There are other issues concerning this unit that apply to the entire public use area. These areawide issues are summarized in Chapter 2 rather than in every unit.

### **Management Intent**

The management intent for the Glacier Unit is to manage for low levels of public use and to enhance recreational opportunities by applying management guidelines that apply to the entire public use area. The unit will be managed with an emphasis on enhancing non-motorized opportunities, while mitigating impacts to habitats for fish and wildlife.

### **Management Guidelines**

- (None)

### **Management Recommendations**

- A non-motorized trail may be developed on the uplands west of the Knik Glacier. This trail will be reserved as a non-motorized easement to DNR.

### **Facilities Recommendations**

- (None)

### **Public Use Sites**

No public use sites are established.

### **Land Use Designation**

All state land is co-designated Public Recreation and Wildlife Habitat. All state land will be retained in public ownership.

### **Allowed/Prohibited Uses**

All land uses (including commercial recreation) may be authorized except for uses/activities that are designated as “prohibited” in Chapter 4, page 4 - 4. Uses may be allowed if they are consistent with the legislation, pertinent state laws, regulations, and management guidelines.

## Unit H – Metal Creek

### **Unit Description**

This unit encompasses state lands within Township 16N, Range 5 & 6E, Township 17N, Range 5 & 6E, and Township 18N, Range 6E, Seward Meridian as depicted on Map 3-1, *Knik River Management Plan Units* page 3 - 3. The dominant feature of this unit is the rugged alpine and narrow valley of Metal Creek.

### **Land Ownership**

There are approximately 28,900 acres of state land and 15 acres of private land within the Metal Creek Unit. There are 32 active mining claims in the unit. See Map 1-2 on page 1 - 5 for generalized land status of the planning area and surrounding lands.

### **Access**

Access is provided primarily by the Knik Glacier Trail (RST 17) on the west side of Metal Creek. This trail terminates a few miles up the valley at an impassable landslide. A few user created trails are located within the unit as well. The active mining claims are a primary destination for many of the users of this unit.

### **Recreational Use**

Low levels of recreational use occur on a limited basis, primarily during snow-free periods.

Non-motorized use occurs at low levels. Non-motorized users access the area for a wide variety of recreational opportunities including, hiking, wildlife viewing, and hunting.

Motorized use occurs at low levels in the southern portion of this unit. Motorized users access this unit for hunting as well as other forms of recreation.

### **Fisheries Habitat**

Metal Creek is the primary waterbody. Habitat for resident fish species may occur in Metal Creek. Metal Creek has not been catalogued as an anadromous stream by the Department of Fish and Game. See Appendix B, Map B-1 for a depiction of those streams and waterbodies included in ADF&G's catalogue of waters important for the spawning, rearing, or migration of anadromous fish.

### **Wildlife Habitat**

Habitat in this unit consists of vegetated valley floor and sub-alpine to unvegetated alpine areas of rock and scree. This habitat is used by many game and non-game species.

Migratory waterfowl habitat is limited. See Appendix B, Map B-2 for waterfowl habitat.

Large and small game species utilize available habitat. Moose utilize habitat primarily for rearing and browsing. Bear habitat encompasses the entire unit. Small game species such as snowshoe hare and spruce grouse can be found in the vegetated areas. See wildlife habitat maps Appendix B.

### **Facilities**

There are no facilities except those related to mining claims.

### **Trails and Easements**

The Knik Glacier Trail (a state recognized RS 2477) provides access to the southern portion of this unit. A few user created trails provide access to areas adjacent to the Knik Glacier Trail.

### **Cultural and Historical**

Historic structures and artifacts or sites related to mining and Native cultures may be located in the Metal Creek Unit.

### **Issues**

Because of the difficulty in access, there are few management issues. Access for private landowners and miners will be maintained.

There are other issues concerning this unit that apply to the entire public use area. These areawide issues are summarized in Chapter 2 rather than in every unit.

### **Management Intent**

The management intent for the Metal Creek Unit is to manage for low levels of public use and to enhance recreational opportunities by applying management guidelines that apply to the entire public use area. It will be managed to provide the full spectrum of public uses, while mitigating impacts of use on fish and wildlife habitat and protecting public safety. Access for private land owners and access for mining will be maintained. DNR will also address impacts to principle fish and wildlife habitats through the TMP described in Appendix D.

### **Management Guidelines**

- DNR will maintain access for mining activities and for private landowners.

### **Management Recommendations**

- (None)

### **Facilities Recommendations**

- (None)

### **Public Use Sites**

No public use sites have been identified.



**Land Use Designation**

All state land is co-designated Public Recreation and Wildlife Habitat. All state land will be retained in public ownership.

**Allowed/Prohibited Uses**

All land uses (including commercial recreation) may be authorized except for uses/activities that are designated as “prohibited” in Chapter 4, page 4 - 4. Uses may be allowed if they are consistent with the legislation, pertinent state laws, regulations, and management guidelines.

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## **Chapter 4: Implementation**

### **Introduction**

This chapter provides the basis, more specifically, for the management of uses and resources within the PUA. It describes the management actions necessary to implement components of the plan. It also explains the relationship between the plan and regulations that have been proposed and those regulations that will be promulgated subsequent to the adoption of the plan. It also describes the relationship between this planning document and other existing state, federal and Borough plans. The procedures for plan review and amendment are also included.

### **General Management of PUA Lands**

DNR will implement the Knik River Management Plan based on authorities as described in AS 41.23.180-230 and Title 38 of the Alaska Statutes and associated regulations. This plan serves as the basis for the management of uses and resources within the PUA planning boundary.

All state lands will be managed consistent with the purposes provided in AS 41.23.180 and with the more specific guidance provided in this plan. Regulations addressing significant issues of public safety have already been adopted by DNR. Additional regulations necessary to implement management guidelines in the plan will be developed subsequent to plan adoption.

### **Access to Public Lands**

DNR will ensure access to the PUA from state and adjacent borough land through public easements, management agreements, or other mechanism. Access at Bodenburg Creek and Manmade Lake will be reserved as public easements and noted to state status plat(s). DNR will work with MSB to survey and plat the Pavilion Parking Area, Sexton Trail, and the Envy Trail as public easements. The Knik Glacier Trail on state land will be reserved as a public easement. DNR will work with BLM to identify 17(b) easements necessary to provide continued public access across lands that are likely to be conveyed to Eklutna Inc.

## **Trails Management Process**

DNR will initiate a Trails Management Process subsequent to the approval of this plan to identify existing trails and assess the level and impact of current use on fish, wildlife and their habitat. DNR should consult with ADF&G to determine if uses are having a deleterious impact on fish and wildlife. The TMP will also identify where additional trails are needed to enhance recreational user opportunities or reduce impacts to fisheries and wildlife habitat. The initial phase of this process will address trails in vegetated areas within the Lower Knik Flats and Lakes and Wetlands units. The second phase will address trails in the remaining units. Details of the TMP are included in Appendix D.

## **Knik River Special Use Areas**

Certain lands, while not included in the PUA legal description, should be managed in a manner consistent with the PUA when they are acquired by DNR. These parcels are located adjacent to the KRPUA, but were not included in the legal boundary of the PUA. Parcel one is owned by the State of Alaska. Parcel two is owned by MHT and may be conveyed to DNR. Parcel three is owned by MSB and may be conveyed to the state in the near future. The fourth parcel is privately owned. These parcels are proposed to be designated as SUA's because of their proximity to the PUA and levels of use related to the PUA. A Special Use Area (ADL 230206) has been adopted for parcel one (see Appendix C and regulations at 11 AAC 96.014(b)(25)). Parcels two, three, and four are proposed for designation as SUA's once they are acquired and all interests are conveyed to the State of Alaska. The existing SUA will be amended to include these additional parcels. All of these parcels are to be managed consistent with the management direction provided in this plan for Unit A. Management recommendations and policies developed through the plan will apply to state lands within the boundary of the PUA and the proposed SUA's. See *General Land Status* Map 1-2 pp. 1 - 5 for a depiction of the parcels mentioned above.

## **Amendments to Current Area Plans**

When adopted, the Knik River Public Use Area Management Plan will function as the land use plan for the area of the PUA under AS 38.04.065 authorities. Currently, land within the PUA is included in both the Susitna Area Plan (SAP) and the Prince William Sound Area Plan (PWSAP) and both plans provide some level of management guidance.

Included in Appendix F are amendments to the SAP and the PWSAP. Amendment of these plans is required in order to reconcile discrepancies between the management plan and the two current area plans, and to ensure that the Knik River Management Plan functions as the (only) management plan for state land in the planning boundary.

Since AS 38.04.065 authorities were not voided in the enacting legislation, it is necessary to enact the Knik River Management Plan to also function as the area plan for the planning area. It replaces the two current area plans but, when adopted, will function to provide both areawide planning policies and plan designations.

Amendment of the PWSAP was required to shift the boundary of the existing units in the PWSAP southward from their current location so there was not a conflict with the Knik River Public Use Area Management Plan. PWSAP boundaries were re-drawn to remove the area of the PWSAP that is now included in the PUA. The effect of this action is that this management plan becomes the basis for management for those three townships that were previously managed under the PWSAP.

Amendment of the SAP was required to shift the boundary of the existing units in the SAP northward from their current location so there was not a conflict with the Knik River Public Use Area Management Plan. SAP boundaries were re-drawn to remove the area of the SAP that is now included in the PUA. The effect of this action is that this management plan becomes the basis for management for those three townships that were previously managed under the SAP.

## **Land Classification Order**

Classification of the lands within the PUA is required under AS 38.04.065 and AS 38.05.300, and is necessary for certain authorizations issued by DNR.

Appendix G includes a Land Classification Order (LCO). It rescinds all previous LCO's within the PUA. All lands within the PUA will be classified Public Recreation and Wildlife Habitat. The LCO consolidates and supersedes all the various LCO's that preceded this planning effort. Prior LCO's classified the area as Public Recreation, Wildlife Habitat, and Resource Management. The new LCO is based on the enactment of the Knik River Management Plan as the foundation for land use planning required under AS 38.04.065(b) and for classification under AS 38.05.300.

## **Enforcement**

The Southcentral Regional Office (SCRO) will continue to work with the Department of Public Safety (DPS) and local law enforcement agencies to carry out law enforcement responsibilities within the Public Use Area. Currently DNR has provided a Reimbursable Services Account to DPS to pay for enforcement activities conducted by DPS within the PUA. DNR may pursue authorizing employees as peace officers within the PUA. This authority was granted through AS 41.23.210. Appropriate training and policy will be developed prior to DNR employees becoming designated peace officers.

DNR has developed regulations at 11 AAC 96.016 to address many issues identified through the public process (see Appendix C for regulations). These regulations directly resulted from input received during meetings and public comment periods and discussions with law enforcement and the Attorney General's Office. Regulations necessary to implement the plan will be developed subsequent to the adoption of the plan.

## **Title 38 Requirements**

The legislation enacting the PUA mandated the creation of this plan to act as the basis for DNR management. It did not, however, rescind Title 38 authorities related to public lands management. These authorities apply to the PUA except where a conflict exists between the enabling legislation, regulations, or specific guidelines contained in the management plan. In these instances, the management plan controls. This management plan has been written to avoid such conflicts, so it is envisioned that this situation will occur rarely.

All lands within the planning area are managed consistent with Alaska Statutes contained in Title 38, applicable regulations in 11 AAC, and existing policies except as they are amended or superseded by this planning document and subsequent regulations.

## **Authority of Management Plan**

DNR management plans, once adopted, are the legally binding policy for the management of state land and resources and they direct permitting, leasing, and other decisions made by DNR. Staff must follow DNR management plans when adjudicating authorizations for the use of state land. Further guidance on implementation of this policy is attached.

## **Allowed and Prohibited Uses**

All uses that are consistent with administrative regulations and the management guidelines of this plan are allowed. Land disposals and timber harvest (commercial and private<sup>1</sup>) are prohibited.

## **Proposed Regulations**

Phase one regulations were adopted for the PUA in 2009. They address issues of great public concern that were identified early in the planning process. These were developed concurrent with the planning process, and are consistent with the management intent, guidelines and recommendations in this plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Except for the types of forest management identified in the Forestry section of Chapter 2.



Subsequent to the adoption of the management plan, phase two regulations will be developed. Phase two regulations are those regulations that are derived from the Knik River Management Plan and are necessary to implement the plan. These regulations will be developed to address issues at discrete locations or areas. DNR may consider additional or modify existing regulations in the future to address impacts to resources, public safety or changes in public use. These regulations will undergo a separate public notice and review period after the final plan is adopted.

Regulations necessary to implement this plan include:

- Prohibition of vehicles (on and off-highway) with a curb weight greater than 1,500 pounds on the Rippy Trail.
- Establishment of the days and hours of operation for shooting range(s).
- Prohibition of motorized use on Manmade Lake from May 1 to September 30.
- Limit speed of motorized vehicles within 100 feet of the water of Manmade Lake to 10 mph or less May 1 to September 30.
- Restrict horsepower of boat motors to 10 horsepower from April 15 to August 9 annually for Jim Lake and Associated wetlands.
- Restrictions on camping and discharge of firearms within public use sites.
- Amend regulations to allow ground disturbance and rutting in excess of 6 inches for the area managed for high use depicted on Map 2-3 of the Plan.
- Additional regulations may be developed through a public process as needed by DNR for the management of the PUA to include but not limited to unauthorized activities at public use sites, stream crossing violations, and commercial use violations.

## **Fees**

DNR has evaluated the institution of a fee program to pay for facilities and management of the PUA. DNR will recommend to the Legislature that a fee schedule be implemented for development and subsequent management of facilities and for the ongoing management of the PUA. A fee schedule should not be implemented until such facilities are developed.

## **Other Lands**

There are state, borough, and private-owned lands adjacent, but not within the legal boundaries of the PUA, that have high levels of use and impacts associated with the PUA. The state owns 252 acres of such lands on the western boundary of the Public Use Area. The MSB owns approximately 471 acres of land adjacent to the PUA at the Pavilion Parking Area on Sullivan Road. The Mental Health Trust owns approximately 78 acres of land east of the Old Glenn Highway Bridge. The fourth parcel is approximately 9 acres of private land

on the northeast side of the Old Glenn Highway Bridge. See *General Land Status Map 1-2*, pp. 1 - 5 for the location of these lands. The three parcels that are not currently owned and managed by DNR were identified for acquisition by the state. See *Parcel Acquisition*, Chapter 2, pp. 2 - 23 for information related to acquisition of these lands.

The plan stipulates how the state land is to be managed and makes recommendations for these lands. In each instance, the intent is to provide consistent management for highly used lands adjacent to the PUA. Until they are included into the PUA, all acquired lands will be recommended as a SUA and will be managed consistent with the intent, guidelines and recommendations for the PUA.

The following recommendations pertain to state, Mental Health Trust, MSB, and private land outside of the legal boundaries of the PUA. These parcels of land adjoin the PUA and are currently used by the public for recreation and access, and the parcels essentially function as part of the PUA. For this reason, and to provide uniformity of management, their acquisition is recommended. These recommendations are mandatory on state land, but discretionary on MSB, MHT, and private land until the parcels in question are conveyed to the state through the Replacement Land Process, which is an agreement between DNR and the Mental Health Trust Authority as to how to deal with land conveyed in error to the Trust Authority. See *Parcel Acquisition* in Chapter 2, pp. 2 - 25 for additional information related to these lands.

#### **State Land within Lands within Section 31, Township 17N, R3E<sup>2</sup>**

State land within Section 31, Township 17N, Range 3E<sup>3</sup> is designated as a SUA (ADL 230206). SUA designations are placed on sites and areas identified for more intensive management by DNR. This designation restricts some uses that would otherwise be classified “generally allowed” under 11 AAC 96.020. The regulations for this SUA were included in Phase One regulations. The amended SUA is included in Appendix E in this plan.

#### **Management Recommendations**

- This land will be managed consistent with the management guidelines of the entire PUA, the unit specific guidelines for Unit A, and the management provided in the SUA (ADL 230206). See Appendix E for specific management of land included in the SUA.
- This land will be recommended to the Legislature to be included in the legal boundary of the PUA.

#### **Matanuska-Susitna Borough Lands**

The *Asset Management Plan for Borough-Owned land in the Butte Area* states that the borough owned portion of the Jim Creek Parcel should be developed for “...motorized recreation off-road vehicle including local off-road motorized vehicle training and learning

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<sup>2</sup> Addressed in Phase I regulations

<sup>3</sup> These state lands are located outside of the KRPUA but are included within the planning boundary.

area as well as a regional access point to Knik River and Knik Glacier.” This management intent is consistent with the legislatively designated purposes of the PUA and the management guidelines contained in the management plan. These lands are designated as a SUA.

### **Management Recommendations**

- The state will work with MSB to acquire a portion of the Jim Creek Parcel that encompasses the Pavilion Parking Area and Sexton and Envy trails. If these lands are acquired it is recommended that they be included in the legal boundary of the PUA and managed consistent with the adjoining unit.
- Until this land is acquired by the State, DNR will work cooperatively with the MSB to ensure that facility development and other significant action that the Borough may undertake are coordinated with the eventual use of this land as part of the PUA.
- Once acquired by the State, this land will be managed consistent with the management guidelines of the entire PUA as well as the unit specific guidelines for Unit A. The existing SUA (ADL 230206) will be amended to include all acquired parcels. See Appendix E for specific management of land included in the SUA.
- Parking, camping and sanitation facilities may be developed at the Pavilion Parking area after DNR has acquired those lands from MSB. The type and location of these facilities will be determined following a site assessment and design process.
- These lands will be recommended to the Legislature to be included in the legal boundary of the PUA.

### **Mental Health Trust Land**

Because of its location and heavy recreation use, this parcel is included within the PUA planning boundary and is recommended for acquisition by DNR.

### **Management Recommendations**

- Once acquired by the State, this land will be managed consistent with the management guidelines of the entire PUA as well as the unit specific guidelines for Unit A. The existing SUA (ADL 230206) will be amended to include all acquired parcels. See Appendix E for specific management of land included in the SUA.
- These lands will be recommended to the Legislature to be included in the legal boundary of the PUA.

### **Private Parcel**

Some users access the PUA from private parcels of land adjacent to the PUA including the private parcel on the northeast end of the Old Glenn Highway Bridge. This parcel is currently used by many individuals in trespass. Other private parcels provide access to the PUA, but none have been identified for acquisition at this time.

### **Management Recommendations**

- The state may purchase the private parcel or access rights across this parcel, on the northeast end of the Old Glenn Highway Bridge. This will only be done if the parcel or access easement is offered by a willing seller. If this parcel is purchased it will be managed consistent with the management guidelines of the entire PUA as well as the unit specific guidelines for Unit A. The existing SUA (ADL 230206) will be amended to include this parcel. See Appendix E for specific management of land included in the SUA.
- These lands will be recommended to the Legislature to be included in the legal boundary of the PUA.

### **Other Land Not Identified in this Plan**

There may be additional land adjacent to the PUA identified for acquisition in the future. The state will only acquire land from willing sellers. Acquisition of any additional land is dependant upon adequate funding. The state may accept donations of land that will enhance use and access to the PUA.

### **Management Recommendations**

- Once acquired by the State, land will be managed consistent with the management guidelines of the entire PUA as well as the unit specific guidelines for the adjacent unit. The existing SUA (ADL 230206) will be amended to include all acquired parcels. See Appendix E for specific management of land included in the SUA.
- Land acquired for the purpose of enhancing access and use of the PUA will be recommended to the Legislature to be included in the legal boundary of the PUA.

### **Navigable Waterbodies**

This management plan is based upon the Public Trust Doctrine, which provides for access, movement and commerce on waterbodies that are navigable. Under this doctrine and the Equal Footing Doctrine applied in the Statehood Act, the state owns and manages all navigable waterbodies (including the water column and the bed of the waterbody). Through a separate action, DNR maintains that the Knik River is navigable and that the rights under the Public Trust Doctrine apply. Shorelands within the Knik River are therefore under state ownership and management. A more complete description of the Public Trust Doctrine is included in Appendix H.

## Coordination with Other Agencies

The state will coordinate activities with other state, federal and borough agencies as appropriate and necessary. Projects proposed within the planning area will be consistent with state, federal and borough requirements of law, ordinance, and code.

## Procedures for Plan Review, Modification, and Amendment

Categories of management intent, policies, implementation actions, and management guidelines of this plan may be changed if conditions warrant. The plan will be updated periodically in response to new data or changing resource conditions or uses.

The various kinds of changes allowed in 11 AAC 55.030 are:

- “A revision to a land use plan is subject to the planning process requirements of AS 38.04.065. For the purposes of this section and AS 38.04.065, a ‘revision’ is an amendment or special exception to a land use plan as follows:
  - An ‘amendment’ permanently changes the land use plan by adding to or modifying the basic management intent for one or more of the plan’s subunits or by changing its allowed or prohibited uses, policies, or guidelines. For example, an amendment might close to new mineral entry an area that the plan designated to be open, allow a land use in an area where the plan prohibited it, or allow land to be opened to homestead entry in an area that the plan designated for retention in public ownership.
  - A ‘special exception’ does not permanently change the provisions of a land use plan and cannot be used as the basis for a reclassification of the subunit. Instead, it allows a one-time, limited-purpose variance of the plan’s provisions, without changing the plan’s general management intent or guidelines. For example, a special exception might be used to grant an eligible applicant a preference right under AS 38.05.035 to purchase land in a subunit designated for retention in public ownership. A special exception might be made if complying with the plan would be excessively burdensome or impractical or if compliance would be inequitable to a third party, and if the purposes and spirit of the plan can be achieved despite the exception.
  - A minor change to a land use plan is not considered a revision under AS 38.04.065. A ‘minor change’ is a change that does not modify or add to the plan’s basic intent, and that serves only to clarify the plan, make it consistent, facilitate its implementation, or make technical corrections. Authority: AS 38.04.065, AS 38.04.900, AS 38.05.020, AS 38.05.300.”

## **Recommended Future Studies**

Management of recreational use and protection of fish and wildlife and their habitat may require periodic study and monitoring. The actions listed below will allow DNR to assess effectiveness of management guidelines and regulations to ensure management remains adaptive to changing use patterns or changing resource conditions. They will provide a base of knowledge on existing fish and wildlife populations and will allow DNR to assess the effectiveness of management actions. All recommended studies and monitoring is subject to acquiring necessary funding and staffing. Recommended studies include:

- Continue to gather baseline data on resources, habitat, and fish and wildlife populations. This data will be collected from ADF&G and other available scientific literature. Baseline data gathering would allow DNR staff to learn more about the habitat requirements and use patterns of the fish and wildlife resources throughout the PUA.
- Initiate a user survey to determine the type, levels and location of use within the PUA. A user survey could also provide information on changing use patterns or if conflict situations exist elsewhere. Survey may include a section that addresses commercial use within the PUA.
- Subsequent to the adoption of the plan, DNR will work with ADF&G to monitor fish and wildlife, impacts to resources, and effectiveness of management actions. The intent is to determine if significant deleterious impacts are occurring to fish and wildlife, or other resources, related to use in the PUA. Should monitoring indicate that these types of impacts are occurring, the agencies will work together to develop timely and appropriate strategies to address the deleterious impacts.
- If necessary, DNR will seek additional funding to carry out additional studies on impacts of use on fish and wildlife resources, habitat, and other state resources.



## Appendices

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## Appendix A: Glossary

This glossary includes definitions and terms used in the plan and on maps.

**AAC.** Alaska Administrative Codes

**ADF&G.** Alaska Department of Fish and Game

**AHRS.** Alaska Heritage Resources Survey

**Anadromous Fish Stream.** A river, lake or stream from its mouth to its uppermost reach including all sloughs and backwaters adjoining the listed water, and that portion of the streambed or lakebed covered by ordinary high water used by salmon to spawn.

Anadromous streams are shown in “The Atlas to the Catalog of Waters Important for Spawning, Rearing, or Migration of Salmon” (referred to as the Anadromous Fish Stream Catalog) compiled by ADF&G.

**Area Plan.** Prepared by DNR, area plans allocate resources and identify allowed and prohibited uses on state lands including uplands, tidelands, and submerged lands.

**AS.** Alaska Statutes

**Authorized Use.** A use allowed by DNR by permit, lease, or other mechanism.

**BLM.** Bureau of Land Management

**Boat or Watercraft.** A device that is used or designed to be used for the movement of people or goods in or on the water, whether manually or mechanically propelled, but does not include personal floatation devices or other floats such as inner tubes, air mattresses, or surf boards.

**Camp or Camping.** To use a vehicle, tent, or shelter, or to arrange bedding or both, with the intent to stay overnight.

**Campground.** An area developed and maintained by the Division of Mining Land and Water which contains one or more campsites.

**Classification.** Land classification identifies the purposes for which state land will be managed. All classification categories are for multiple use, although a particular use may be considered primary. Land may be given a total of three classifications in combination.

**Commercial.** An action or operation that generates income from the buying, selling, renting, bartering, or trading goods or services.

**Commercial Recreation.** Recreational uses of lands, waters, and resources for business or financial gain, such as guided sport fishing, guided and outfitted sport hunting and guided recreation.

**Critical Habitat.** For the purposes of implementing AS 41.23.200(d)(2) within the Knik River Public Use Area, critical habitat is defined as habitat that is essential to the perpetuation of a species of fish or wildlife within the Knik River Public Use Area.

**DNR.** The Department of Natural Resources

**Developed Recreational Facilities.** These include any of the following: sanitary structures including trash receptacles, campground, picnic area, rest area, visitor information center, swim beach or area, trailhead, and parking area.

**Division.** The Division of Mining, Land & Water

**DMLW.** Same as “Division.” See “Division.”

**DOF.** Division of Forestry

**DPOR.** The Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation

**Easement.** An interest in land owned by another that entitles its holder to a specific limited use or purpose.

**17(b) Easement.** An easement across Native corporation land reserved under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 (ANCSA). Uses of the easements are limited to transportation purposes and other uses specified in the act and in conveyance documents.

**Facilities.** Includes buildings, parking areas, camping areas, a boat launch area or ramp, shelters/cabins, and sanitary facilities.

**Facility Recommendations.** A recommended type and character of facility consistent with the plans intent that allows the manager to use discretion in deciding the specific means for best achieving the intent based on particular circumstances and further site analysis.

**Feasible.** Capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, technical, and safety factors.

**Fish and Wildlife.** Any species of aquatic fish, invertebrates, and amphibians, in any stage of their life cycle, and all species of birds and mammals, found or that may be introduced in Alaska, except domestic birds and mammals.

**Fish Spawning and Rearing Area.** Area identified as important for fish spawning and rearing.

**Goal.** A statement of basic intent or general condition. Goals are not quantifiable and do not have specific dates for achievement; they are long-term in orientation.

**Habitat.** Areas that serve as a concentrated use area for fish and wildlife species during a sensitive life history stage where alteration of the habitat and /or human disturbance could result in a permanent loss of a population or sustained yield of a species.

**Leasable Minerals.** Leasable minerals include deposits of coal, sulfur phosphates, oil shale, sodium potassium, oil, and gas.

**Legislatively Designated Area.** An area set aside by the state legislature for special management actions and retained in public ownership.

**Locatable Minerals.** Includes both metallic (gold, silver, lead, etc.) and non-metallic (feldspar, asbestos, and mica, etc.) minerals.

**Management Area.** An area established around identifiable features or resources used to reduce the effect of an activity or use on the feature or resources.

**Management Guidelines.** A specific course of action that must be followed when a DNR manager permits, leases, or otherwise authorizes use of state lands or resources. Guidelines range from giving general guidance for decision-making or identifying factors that need to be considered, to setting detailed standards for on-the-ground-decisions. Some guidelines state the intent that must be followed and allow flexibility in achieving it.

**Management intent statement.** The statements that define the department's near and long-term management objectives and the methods to achieve those objectives.

**Management Recommendation.** A recommended course of action that is consistent with the plan's intent that allows the resource manager to use discretion in deciding the specific means for best achieving the intent. Deviation from management recommendations requires written justification.

**Management Unit.** Lands that are similar topographically and have similar use patterns; in this plan there are eight units described herein.

**Materials.** Includes sand, gravel, rock, peat, pumice, cinders, clay, and sod.

**May.** Same as "should." See "should."

**MHT.** Mental Health Trust

**Mining.** Any structure or activity for commercial exploration and recovery of minerals, including, but not limited to resource transfer facilities, camps, and other support facilities associated with mineral development. The term “mining” does not refer to offshore prospecting.

**Mining claim.** Rights to deposits of minerals, subject to AS 38.05.185-38.05.275, in or on state land that is open to claim staking may be acquired by discovery, location and recording as prescribed in AS 38.05.185-38.05.275. The locator has the exclusive right of possession and extraction of the minerals lying within the boundaries of the claim, subject to AS 38.05.185 -38.05.275.

**MSB.** Matanuska-Susitna Borough

**Moose Calving Concentration Area.** An area identified as having a higher density of moose calving than the surrounding habitat.

**Multiple use.** Means the management of state land and its various resource values so that it is used in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the people of Alaska, making the most judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources or related services over areas large enough to provide sufficient latitude for periodic adjustments in use to conform to changing needs and conditions; it includes:

- a) the use of some land for less than all of the resources, and
- b) a combination of balanced and diverse resource uses that takes into account the short-term and long-term needs of present and future generations for renewable and nonrenewable resources, including, but not limited to, recreation, range, timber, minerals, watershed, wildlife and fish, and natural scenic, scientific, and historic values. [AS 38.04.910]

**NALA.** North Anchorage Land Agreement

**Native-owned land.** Land that is patented or will be patented to a Native corporation.

**Native-selected land.** Federally owned land that is selected by a Native corporation but not yet patented.

**Navigable.** Used in its legal context, it refers to lakes and rivers that meet federal or state criteria for navigability. Under the Equal Footing Doctrine, the Alaska Statehood Act, and the Submerged Lands Act, the state owns land under navigable waterbodies.

**Off Highway Vehicle.** A recreational-type off-road or all-terrain vehicle with a curb weight of up to 1,500 pounds, including a snowmobile and four-wheeler.

**OHA.** Office of History and Archaeology, a Section of the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation.

**OHV.** Off Highway Vehicle

**OHWM.** Ordinary High Water Mark

**Ordinary High Water Mark.** That line on the shore of a non-tidal river or stream that reflects the highest level of water during an ordinary year and is established by fluctuations of water and indicated by physical characteristics such as clear, natural line impressed on the bank; shelving; changes in the character of the soil; destruction of terrestrial vegetation; the presence of litter and debris; or other appropriate means that consider the characteristics of the surrounding area.

**Policy.** An intended course of action or a principle for guiding actions; in this plan, DNR policies for land and resource management include goals, management intent statements, management guidelines, land use designations, implementation plans and procedures, and various other statements of DNR's intentions.

**PLO.** Abbreviation of Public Land Order. A PLO is withdrawal federal land from the public domain for specific purposes. In the PUA, PLO 3324 is a federal land withdrawal for the purpose of protecting public recreation values

**Primitive Recreational Facility.** Any structure that is not one of those listed under Developed Recreational Facility. These include user created airstrips, boat launches, or camping areas/sites.

**PUA.** Knik River Public Use Area

**SCRO.** Southcentral Regional Office

**Sensitive Habitat.** Habitat determined by DNR to be important for a particular life stage of fish and wildlife. They are usually localized in an area and are usually characterized by a greater number and density of species than in adjacent areas. In the context of this plan, these areas are to receive a higher level of management than other habitat areas. If significant deleterious impacts occur to this habitat, local distribution level impacts may occur.

**Serious Degradation.** This term is used to refer to the amount of degradation that occurs on trails. It is meant to describe a serious deficiency in the tread of a trail, which is usually associated with specific, severe trail damage causing the tread of the trail to deteriorate to the point where it cannot be safely used by the public or where that use is seriously compromised.

**Shoreland.** Land belonging to the state that is covered by navigable, nontidal water up to the ordinary high water mark as modified by accretion, erosion or reliction. (See definition of Navigable.) Shorelands are generally lake bottoms or the beds of navigable rivers and streams.

**State land.** A generic term meaning all state land, including all state-owned and state-selected uplands, all shorelands, tidelands and submerged lands. See also definitions of state-owned land and state-selected land as well as definitions for shorelands. ‘State Land’ excludes lands owned by the University of Alaska, the Mental Health Trust Authority, or by state agencies that have acquired through deed.

**State-owned land.** Land that is patented or will be patented to the state, including uplands, tidelands, shorelands, and submerged lands.

**SUA.** Special Use Area

**Sustainable Trail.** A trail that conforms to its terrain and environment, is capable of handling its intended use without serious degradation. These typically do not require extensive re-routing and re-building of current trails.

**Swan and Loon Nesting Habitat.** The area of habitat that supports active nesting of trumpeter swans and loons. In this plan, the majority of this type of habitat is located in the Lakes and Wetlands Unit.

**Shall.** Same as “will.” See “will.”

**Should.** States intent for a course of action or a set of conditions to be achieved. Guidelines modified by the word “should” state the plan’s intent and allow the manager to use discretion in deciding the specific means for best achieving the intent or if the particular circumstances justify deviations from the intended action or set of conditions. See Directors Policy File 06-01 for guidance.

**TMP.** The Trails Management Process

**Trail.** A trail has an identifiable tread and evidence of repeated use. In the PUA, DNR will identify trails that will be managed consistent with the TMP.

**Tree.** For the purposes of this plan, “tree” means a woody perennial plant with a single, well-defined stem, a definite crown shape, and a diameter at breast height of 5.0 inches or greater.

**Trespass.** To enter upon land without authorization from the land owner.

**Trespass structure.** A permanent or temporary structure built on land owned by the State of Alaska without benefit of an authorization by DNR.

**Unit.** See Management Unit.

**Uplands.** Lands above mean high water, ordinary high water mark, or lands that do not meet the definition of a wetland.



**Use Level.** A representation of the level of use occurring in a unit. Three use levels are provided in the plan. They are low, moderate, and high.

**USFWS.** United States Fish & Wildlife Service

**Waterfowl Nesting Area.** Areas of waterfowl nesting habitat adjacent to waterbodies.

**Wetlands.** Means those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs and similar areas.

**Wildlife.** All species, especially mammals, living in a natural undomesticated state.

**Will.** Requires a course of action or a set of conditions to be achieved. A guideline modified by the word “will” must be followed by DNR land managers in the issuance of authorizations and other decisions. Deviation from plan designations, management intent, or management guidelines modified by “will” requires a plan amendment. (See Chapter 4- Types of Plan Changes). See Directors Policy File 06-01 for guidance.







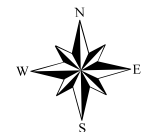
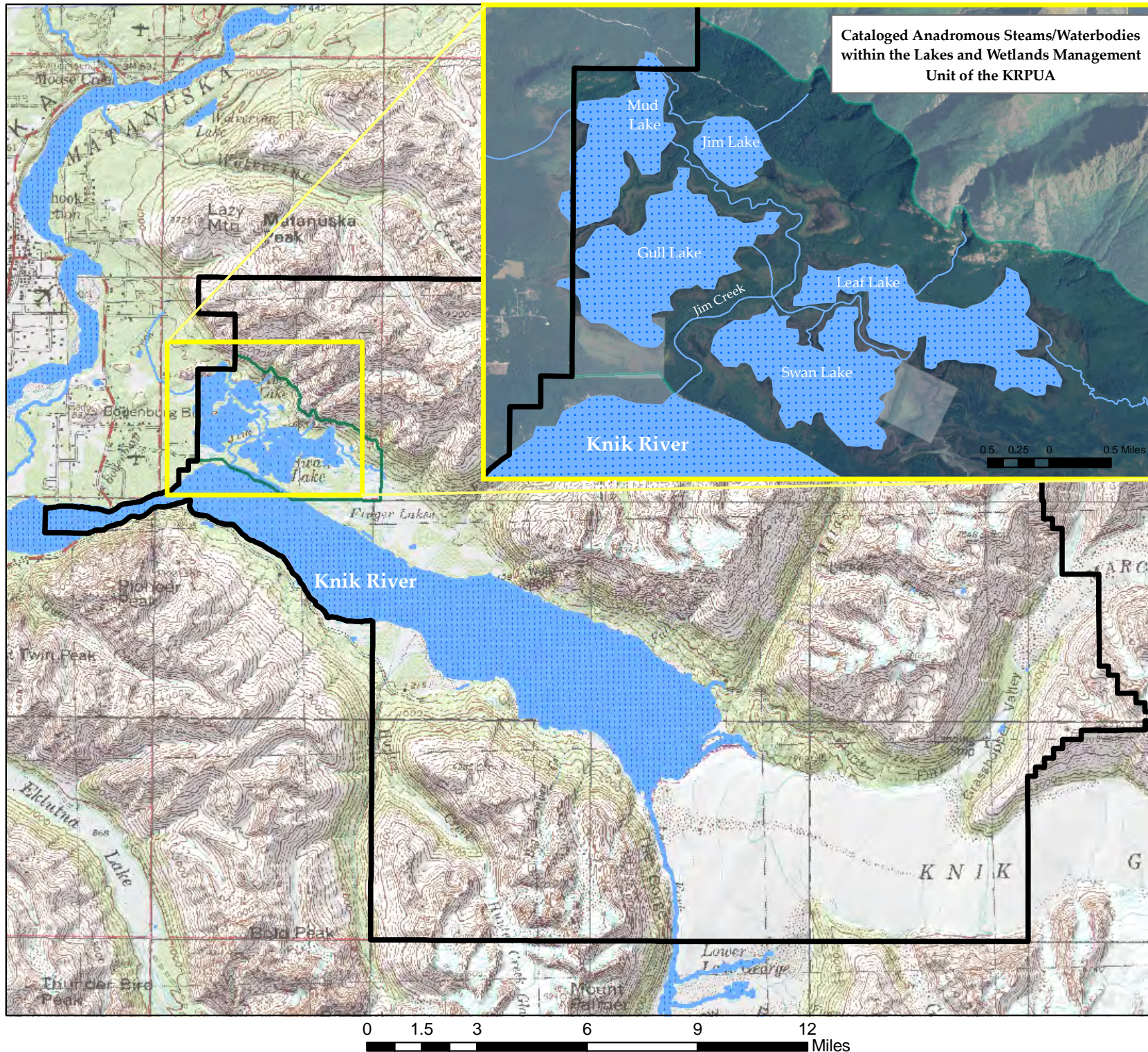
# Knik River Public Use Area

(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

## Anadromous Streams and Waterbodies

Map B-1

-  KRP UA Legal Boundary
-  Lakes and Wetlands Unit
-  Anadromous Waterbodies
-  Anadromous Streams



This map is for graphic representation only  
and is intended to be used only as a guide.  
Habitat information derived from ADF&G data.





Coordinate System: NAD\_1983\_UTM\_Zone\_6N

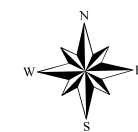
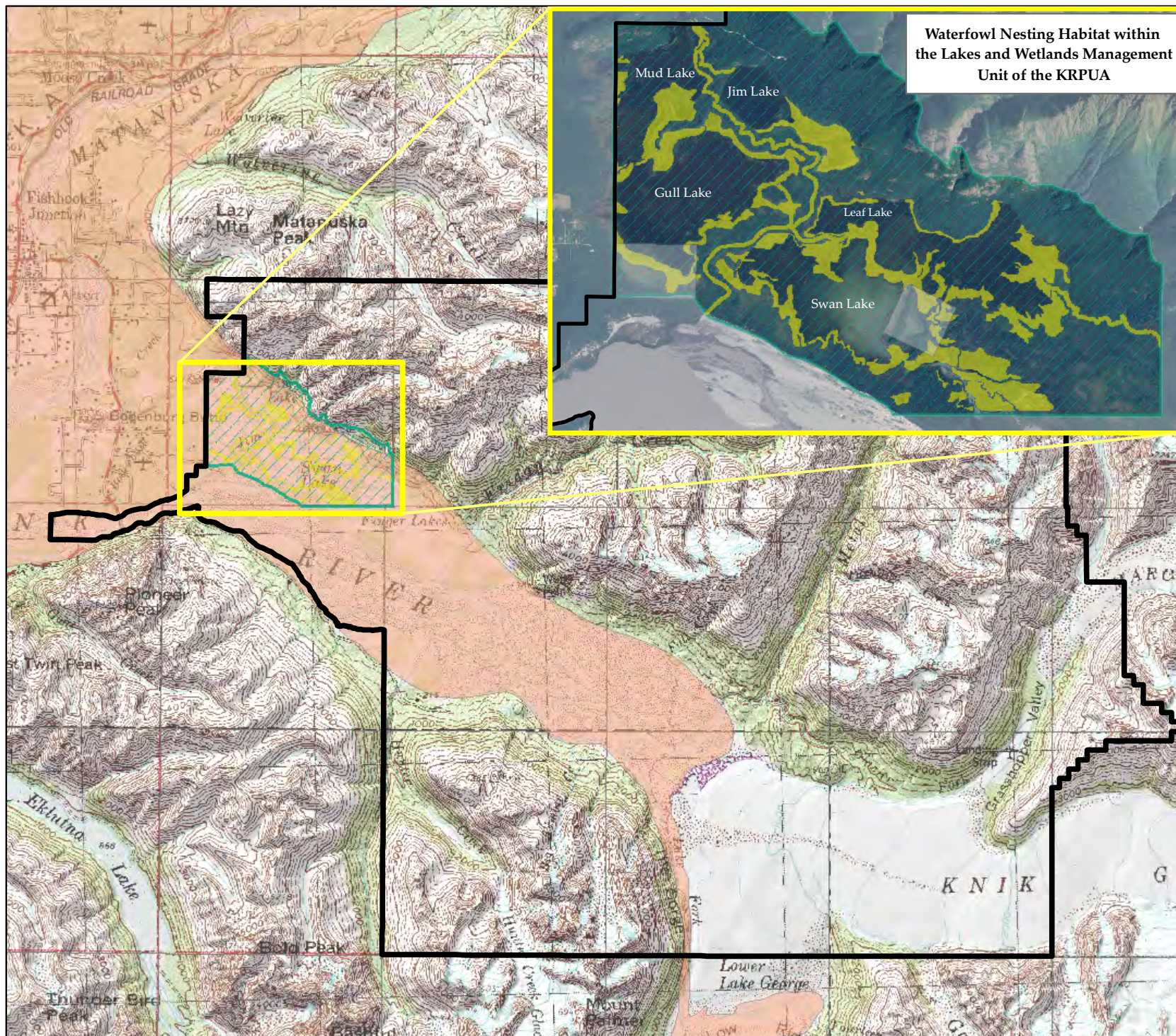


# Knik River Public Use Area

(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

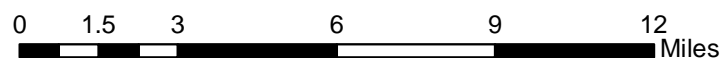
## Waterfowl Habitat

-  KRPUA Legal Boundary
-  Lakes and Wetlands Unit
-  General Waterfowl Habitat
-  Waterfowl Nesting Habitat



This map is for graphic representation only  
and is intended to be used only as a guide.  
Habitat information derived from ADF&G data.

Coordinate System: NAD\_1983\_UTM\_Zone\_6N







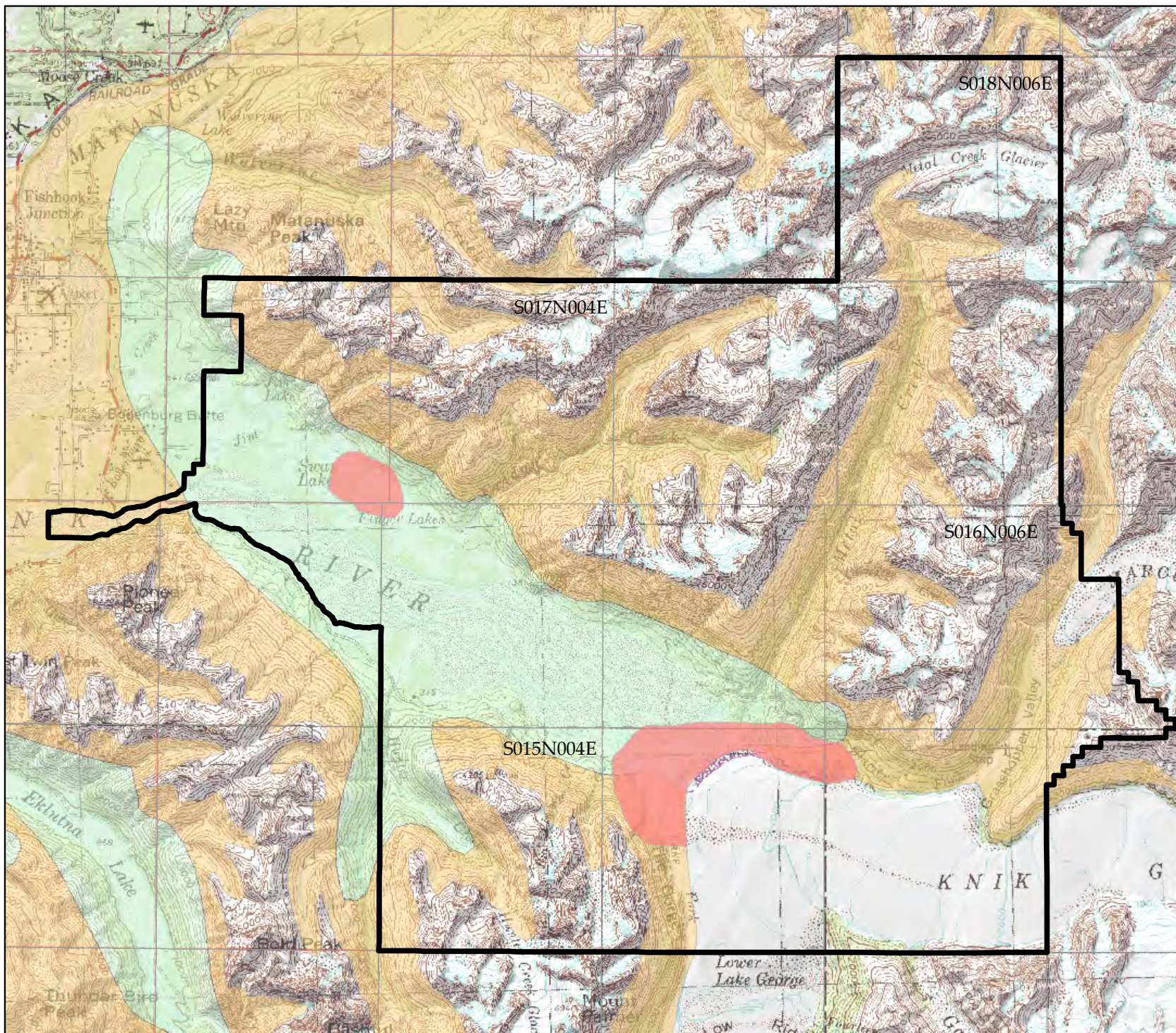


# Knik River Public Use Area

(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

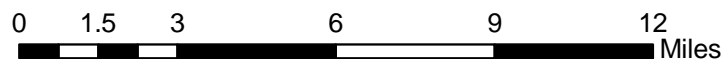
## Moose Habitat

-  KRPUA Legal Boundary
- MOOSE**
  -  General Habitat
  -  Calving and Rutting Areas
  -  Calving Concentration Areas



This map is for graphic representation only  
and is intended to be used only as a guide.  
Habitat information derived from ADF&G data.

Coordinate System: NAD\_1983\_UTM\_Zone\_6N






# Knik River Public Use Area

(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

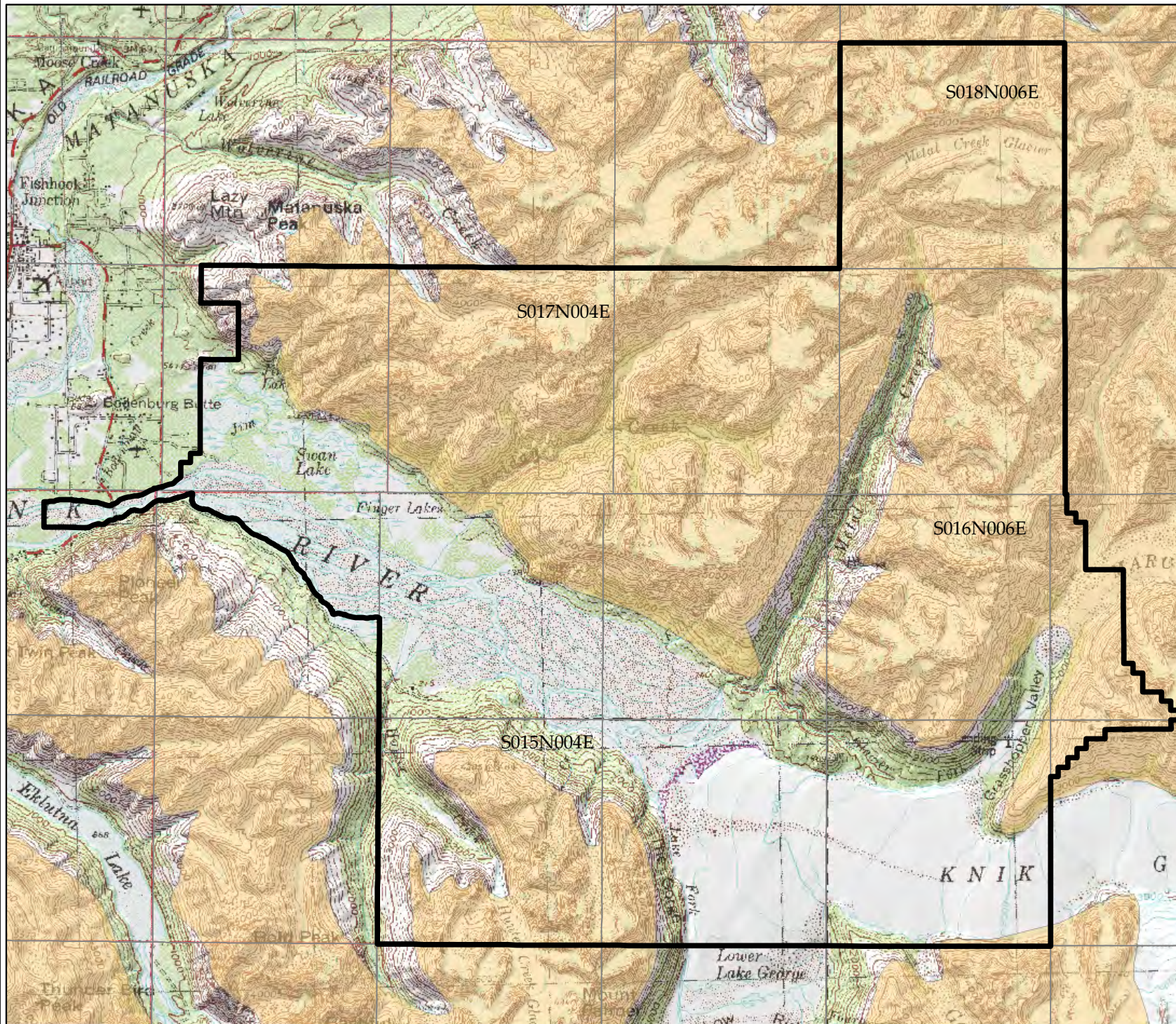
## Dall Sheep Habitat

 Dall Sheep Habitat



This map is for graphic representation only  
and is intended to be used only as a guide.  
Habitat information derived from ADF&G data.

Coordinate System: NAD\_1983\_UTM\_Zone\_6N



0 1.5 3 6 9 12 Miles



## Appendix C: Proposed Regulations

### Adopted and Proposed Regulations

There are two sets of regulations that relate to the management of land uses and resources in the Public Use Area. Certain of the recommendations in this plan can only be implemented through regulations. Recommendations that will require regulations are included in this appendix so that the linkage between the two are apparent.

Phase 1 regulations have been adopted for the Knik River Public Use Area. These regulations address many of the serious issues identified by the public early in the planning process.

Regulations necessary to implement the plan are summarized in the Phase 2 Regulations below. Consistent with statute, Phase 2 Regulations will be developed through a public process with an opportunity to review and provide comments on draft regulations. DNR may determine that additional regulations are necessary at some future date for management of the PUA consistent with this plan, statute, or regulation.

### Phase 1 Regulations As Adopted

#### 11 AAC 96.016. Designated public use areas

(a) This section addresses management of sites and areas of state land, or interests in land, that have been designated under AS 41.23 as public use areas. Unless otherwise provided in (b) of this section, special requirements applicable to designated public use areas are in addition to requirements applicable to state land under AS 38, AS 41.23, and this title.

(b) Within areas designated under AS 41.23 as public use areas,

(1) a permit or other written authorization is required for an activity listed in 11 AAC 96.010;

(2) commercial recreation uses and activities involving generally allowed uses under 11 AAC 96.020 are subject to registration under 11 AAC 96.018;

(3) unless otherwise prohibited in (c) of this section, the land uses and activities listed in 11 AAC 96.020, alone or in combination, are generally allowed uses without any permit or other written authorization from the department, except that a land use or activity for a commercial recreation purpose requires prior registration under 11 AAC 96.018; and

- (4) a person may not engage in the commercial harvest of non-timber forest products without a permit under 11 AAC 96.035.
- (c) Within the Knik River public use area as described in AS 41.23.230,
  - (1) a person may not leave a vehicle unattended for more than 72 hours;
  - (2) a person may not transport a non-functional vehicle into the area;
  - (3) a person may not operate a vehicle in excess of 10,000 pounds curb weight for private or commercial activity without prior written authorization from the department;
  - (4) a person may not operate a vehicle in a manner that results in disturbance of wetlands or the organic mat to a depth greater than six inches without prior written authorization from the department; in this paragraph,
    - (A) "organic mat" has the meaning given in 11 AAC 95.900;
    - (B) "wetlands" has the meaning given "freshwater wetlands" in 11 AAC 112.990;
  - (5) an open fire is subject to the requirements of 11 AAC 95.410 and 11 AAC 95.450; a person may not have an open fire larger than four feet in diameter except on open and non-vegetated areas at least 100 feet from forested land without prior written authorization from the department;
  - (6) a person may not burn or cause to burn a wooden pallet, a vehicle, a structure, household or commercial refuse, construction debris, or non-naturally occurring materials;
  - (7) a person may not place, dump, or discard waste or refuse;
  - (8) a person may not place, dump, discard, or release hazardous substances, including those contained within appliances, batteries, automotive fluids, and electronic devices; in this paragraph, "hazardous substance" has the meaning given in AS 46.03.826;
  - (9) a person may not construct or maintain a structure other than a temporary structure authorized under this chapter, and may not abandon a structure;
  - (10) a person may not cut, collect, or harvest a dead standing or live tree without prior written authorization from the department; in this paragraph, "tree" means a woody perennial plant with a single, well-defined stem, a definite crown shape, and a diameter at breast height of five inches or greater;
  - (11) subject to 11 AAC 96.020(a) (5)(E), a person may not erect a camp, structure, or facility, whether occupied or unoccupied, for more than 14 consecutive days for private personal use without prior written authorization from the department, and must move the

camp, structure, or facility and all equipment at least two miles away at the end of the 14-day period; a person may not relocate a camp, structure, or facility to a site within two miles of the initial site for at least 96 consecutive hours;

(12) a person may not, without prior written authorization from the department, discharge a firearm for purposes of target practice at a

(A) target other than one made from wood, paper, clay, or like material; or

(B) tree or other plant, whether live or dead, or at a target affixed to or placed on a tree or other plant;

(13) a person may not discharge a firework;

(14) except for the purposes of lawful hunting or trapping, a person may not discharge a firearm on or within the following without prior written authorization of the department:

(A) within one-quarter mile of the Maude Road extension, Old Glenn Highway, Knik River Road, or the Rippy Trail, as depicted on the department's map entitled Recreational Shooting Restrictions within the KRPUA & Knik River SUA, dated June 30, 2008 and adopted by reference;

(B) within one-quarter mile of the Knik Glacier Trail (RST 17) or the line of ordinary high water of the Knik River west of the north-south township line between Township 16 North, Range 3 East and Township 16 North, Range 4 East, Seward Meridian that corresponds to 148 degrees, 49 minutes, 8.59 seconds west longitude, as depicted on the map entitled Recreational Shooting Restrictions within the KRPUA & Knik River SUA, adopted by reference in (A) of this paragraph;

(C) on the bed of the Knik River west of the north-south township line between Township 16 North, Range 3 East and Township 16 North, Range 4 East, Seward Meridian that corresponds to 148 degrees, 49 minutes, 8.59 seconds west longitude, as depicted on the map entitled Recreational Shooting Restrictions within the KRPUA & Knik River SUA, adopted by reference in (A) of this paragraph; in this subparagraph, "bed" means the area within the lines of ordinary high water on each side of the water body;

(D) within one-quarter mile of a developed facility, unless the developed facility is specifically designated for the discharge of firearms;

(15) except for the purposes of lawful hunting, fishing, and trapping, a person may not repeatedly approach fish or wildlife in a manner that results in the animal altering its behavior;

(16) a person may not construct, develop, improve, widen, brush, or otherwise create a road or trail without prior written authorization from the department; and



(17) a person may not damage, deface, destroy, or remove public property, or property leased or rented by the department or local government.

(d) Within the Knik River public use area as described in AS 41.23.230, a person who fails to obtain or comply with the terms, conditions, or limitations of a permit required under (b)(1) or (4) of this section or registration required under (b)(2) of this section, or who engages in a use or activity prohibited under (c) of this section is subject to citation and penalty under AS 41.23.220.

## **Phase 2 Regulations**

Phase two regulations are those regulations that are necessary to implement the plan. These draft regulations directly result from management guidelines contained in the KRPUA Management Plan. Following the adoption of the plan, these regulations will be proposed through the regulation process and will go through an additional public review process before they are adopted.

- Prohibition of vehicles (on and off-highway) with a curb weight greater than 1,500 pounds on the Rippy Trail.
- Establishment of the days and hours of operation for shooting range(s).
- Prohibition of motorized use on Manmade Lake from May 1 to September 30.
- Limit speed of motorized vehicles within 100 feet of the water of Manmade Lake to 10 mph or less May 1 to September 30.
- Restrict horsepower of boat motors to 10 horsepower from April 15 to August 9 annually for Jim Lake and associated wetlands.
- Restrictions on camping and discharge of firearms within public use sites.
- Amend regulations to allow ground disturbance and rutting in excess of 6 inches for the area managed for high use depicted on Map 2-3 of the Plan.
- Additional regulations may be developed through a public process as needed by DNR for the management of the PUA to include but not limited to unauthorized activities at public use sites, stream crossing violations, and commercial use violations.

## **Appendix D: Trails Management Process**

### **Knik River Public Use Area**

### **Trails Management Process**

#### **Introduction**

OHV use related to recreation, hunting and fishing has increased significantly in the Knik River Valley in recent years. As a result, numerous trails have been created and areas that previously received little or no motorized use are now seeing frequent use. Some of these trails have been developed in sensitive fish and wildlife habitat areas. Others have been developed in wetlands, where repeated use results in degradation of the soil and development of multiple routes. DNR seeks to address trails impacts to wetlands and sensitive habitat through a comprehensive Trails Management Process (TMP).

#### **Trails Management Process**

The TMP will address existing and newly developed trails in the Knik River Public Use Area (PUA). The TMP will provide an inventory of all trails to be managed by DNR, and provide an assessment of trail conditions and their impacts to fish and wildlife habitat. The assessment will identify trails that have significant impacts on fish and wildlife habitat, particularly waterfowl nesting areas, trumpeter swan or loon nesting areas, moose calving concentration areas, and fish spawning areas. Trails in wetland areas will be assessed to determine if they are having significant impacts on soils and hydrology. Trails impacting other state resources will also be assessed.

Based on those assessments, existing trails determined to have significant negative impacts on fish and wildlife habitat, or other state resources, may be closed, be re-routed, or face seasonal restrictions. These actions are consistent with the statutory mandate to protect fish and wildlife habitat so traditional use of the fish and wildlife populations can continue.

Through the TMP, DNR will identify potential new trails (non-motorized and motorized) for development. DNR may also identify existing trails that can be developed to a higher standard or expanded. Trails may also be identified for reservation as public easements for specific purposes. These actions are consistent with the statutory mandates to maintain and enhance recreation and to provide for a full spectrum of recreational opportunities.

The TMP will not address motorized and non-motorized uses that are allowed by regulation off of trails. Examples of this type of use include game retrieval, recreational use off existing trails, and recreation off trails when snow and frost conditions permit. In general the impacts associated with this type of use do not persist from year to year, and are minor in nature. These uses are subject to regulations at 11AAC 96.015(c). Trails associated with these uses will not be classified through this process.

DNR may accept and adjudicate applications to re-route, designate, develop, or expand trails. DNR may reserve limited use easements on trails developed consistent with Department authorizations.

All new trails authorized by the Department will be reserved through public easements, and be developed as sustainable trails. Sustainable trails are capable of handling the intended use without serious environmental degradation. By following landscape contours, utilizing terrain features, and shedding water, sustainable trails require minimal maintenance over the long term.

The foundation of trail sustainability focuses on initial trail design to maximize the resilience of the trail to use-related impacts, minimize resource degradation, and maximize user enjoyment. While initial construction costs may be more for sustainable trails because the tread length is often longer to meet controlled grade limits, reduced future maintenance costs should compensate for those initial investments. Integral to sustainability is a sound trail plan to meet user needs and desires within the trail location environment. This planning is the core for any successful trail project.

## **Trails Management Process Policy**

### **Intent**

This Trails Management Process is intended to be used for all classified trails in the PUA. The process provides direction and design parameters for trail planning, construction, maintenance, and condition assessment. Trail managers will implement the process following adoption of the PUA Management Plan with the following benefits in mind:

1. Maintaining and enhancing opportunities for the recreating public.
2. Manage use through proper planning, design and construction of trails.
3. Ensure long-term savings in maintenance costs.
4. Demonstrate that DNR is committed to managing uses, and the associated impacts, so future generations are able to enjoy the resources of the PUA.

## **Goals**

The following goals will guide DNR in management of trail resources in the PUA:

1. Establish Trail Management Objectives for individual trails and trail segments.
2. Implement a standardized trail classification system, including general criteria and design parameters.
3. Support the creation of sustainable trails.
4. Develop an effective and efficient procedure for trail inventory and assessment.
5. Standardize trail terminology that is consistent with other public land management agencies throughout the state.

## **Process**

The following text provides the general process that DNR will follow in the classification and assessment of trails in the PUA.

### **1. Trail Management Objectives**

Trail Management Objectives (TMOs) are defined as the documentation of the intended purpose and management strategies of a trail based upon the management plan or management intent of an area. TMOs document the Trail Class, Designed Use, Design Parameters, and other trail-specific considerations for both planned and existing trails. A trail may have different TMOs for sections of the trail that are or will be managed differently. TMOs are very helpful in providing information for subsequent trail planning, management, and reporting. Each classified trail should have TMOs identified based upon the unit's management or trail plan.

### **2. Trail Classification System**

The Trail Classification System is intended to provide uniform principles for trail classification, maintenance, marking, design, and construction. The Trail Classification System adopted by DNR is a close adaptation of the National Trail Classification System being formally adopted by most federal land management agencies, and therefore will be a major step forward in applying consistent terminology and management guidance on trails in the PUA. This system is based on identifying the Type and Class of an existing or planned trail.

Only two Trail Types are referenced in this process: Terra (Standard) Trails, and Water Trails. Each trail is further separated into one of five Trail Classes, ranging from least developed (Trail Class 1) to most developed (Trail Class 5). General criteria are supplied to define Trail Classes applicable to all system trails. Trail Classes are further refined through Trail Design Parameters that offer construction specifications by the type of Designed Use, such as hiker, bicycle, ATV, motorized and non-motorized boating and snowmobile. Trail Design Parameters provide guidance for the assessment, survey and design, construction, repair, and maintenance of trails, based on the Trail Class and Designed Use of the trail.

### **3. Sustainable Trails**

A Sustainable Trail is defined as a trail that conforms to its terrain and environment, is capable of handling its intended use without serious degradation, and requires minimal maintenance.

Trail “Sustainability” is a fairly new and progressive concept that is being discussed broadly within the national trails community. Certain design concepts that are time-tested, sound, and fairly simple, form the essential elements of sustainable design, while best management practices are currently being developed to guide overall trail management.

Sustainable trails are guided by trail management objectives (TMOs) and constructed to design parameters that support intended use without impact to the surrounding environment, which contributes to user enjoyment and protection of resources. Trail alignment and grades conform to the local terrain, while erosion is minimized and the tread stabilized. Sustainable trails integrate well into the environment and do not negatively impact the ecological integrity of the environment.

This process mandates that a sustainable trails be incorporated as follows:

- New Trails: All new trails will be built as sustainable trails.
- Existing Trails: As existing trails are repaired or re-routed, they may be upgraded using the Sustainable Trails Framework.

### **4. Develop a Means for Trail Inventory and Assessment**

Before trail maintenance and repair strategies can be fully developed, an assessment of trails and their condition must be made, based on the TMOs identified for the trail. While TMOs provide a vision for future trail conditions, Trail Assessments offer an accurate snapshot of existing conditions and what is needed to meet Design Parameters identified by TMOs. The difference between TMOs and Trail Assessments will help determine repair costs.

Trail inventories and assessments require that detailed data be collected for each trail. There are several data collection methods being used in Alaska, from simple pen and paper technologies to sophisticated GPS/data-logger programs. Various methodologies will be reviewed during planned assessments and options will be considered based on their cost effectiveness and ease of use. No specific method is recommended at this time.

### **5. Trail Terminology**

Terminology referenced in this process has been adopted from many sources including the U.S. Forest Service, DNR, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, and the Alaska Parks and Recreation Association. Uniform terminology will also greatly benefit the application process for State Park’s Recreational Trail Grant program or other grant and funding sources.



### **Trail Classification System Criteria**

The trail classification used in this process is adopted from sources including the U.S. Forest Service, and Bureau of Land Management, the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation. The five Trail Classes range from least developed (Trail Class 1) to most developed (Trail Class 5):

- Trail Class 1: Minimal/Undeveloped Trail
- Trail Class 2: Simple/Minor Development Trail
- Trail Class 3: Developed/Improved Trail
- Trail Class 4: Highly Developed Trail
- Trail Class 5: Fully Developed Trail

Trail Classes are an inventory convention used to identify applicable Design Parameters. Trail Class descriptors reflect typical attributes of trails in each class. Trail-specific exceptions may occur for any Trail Class descriptor, provided that the general intent of the corresponding Trail Class is retained. There is a direct relationship between Trail Class and Managed Use: one cannot be determined without consideration of the other. There can be only one Trail Class identified per trail or trail segment. The Trail Class for each trail or trail segment will be based on applicable land management plan direction, trail-specific decisions, and other related direction. The appropriate Trail Class should be determined at the trail-specific level. Apply the Trail Class that most closely matches the trail's TMOs.

Trail prescriptions describe the desired management of each trail, based on management plan direction. These prescriptions take into account protection of sensitive resources and other management guidelines and recommendations. To meet prescription, each trail is assigned an appropriate Trail Class (1-5). These general categories are used to identify applicable Trail Design Parameters and basic indicators used to help determine construction and/or maintenance costs. These classes have been adapted from the U.S. Forest Service. The General Criteria below define each Trail Class and are applicable to all system trails. Trail Class descriptions define “typical” attributes, and exceptions may occur for any attribute.

<b>Trail Attributes</b>	<b>Trail Class 1</b> <i>Minimal/Undeveloped Trail</i>	<b>Trail Class 2</b> <i>Simple/Minor Development Trail</i>	<b>Trail Class 3</b> <i>Developed/Improved Trail</i>	<b>Trail Class 4</b> <i>Highly Developed Trail</i>	<b>Trail Class 5</b> <i>Fully Developed Trail</i>
<b>General Criteria</b> Physical Characteristics to be Applied to all Designated Trails					
<b>Tread &amp; Traffic Flow</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Tread intermittent and often indistinct</li> <li>♦ May require route finding</li> <li>♦ Native materials only</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Tread discernible and continuous, but narrow and rough</li> <li>♦ Few or no allowances constructed for passing</li> <li>♦ Native materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Tread obvious and continuous</li> <li>♦ Width accommodates unhindered one-lane travel (occasional allowances constructed for passing)</li> <li>♦ Typically native materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Tread wide and relatively smooth with few irregularities</li> <li>♦ Width may consistently accommodate two-lane travel</li> <li>♦ Native or imported materials</li> <li>♦ May be hardened</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Width generally accommodates two-lane and two-directional travel, or provides frequent passing turnouts</li> <li>♦ Commonly hardened with asphalt or other imported material</li> </ul>
<b>Obstacles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Obstacles common</li> <li>♦ Narrow passages; brush, steep grades, rocks and logs present</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Obstacles occasionally present</li> <li>♦ Blockages cleared to define route and protect resources</li> <li>♦ Vegetation may encroach into trailway</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Obstacles infrequent</li> <li>♦ Vegetation cleared outside of trailway</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Few or no obstacles exist</li> <li>♦ Grades typically &lt;12%</li> <li>♦ Vegetation cleared outside of trailway</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ No obstacles</li> <li>♦ Grades typically &lt;8%</li> </ul>
<b>Constructed Features &amp; Trail Elements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Minimal to non-existent</li> <li>♦ Drainage is functional</li> <li>♦ No constructed bridges or foot crossings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Structures are of limited size, scale, and number</li> <li>♦ Drainage functional</li> <li>♦ Structures adequate to protect trail infrastructure and resources</li> <li>♦ Primitive crossings and fords</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Trail structures (walls, steps, drainage, raised trail) may be common and substantial</li> <li>♦ Trail bridges as needed for resource protection and appropriate access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Structures frequent and substantial</li> <li>♦ Substantial trail bridges are appropriate at water crossings</li> <li>♦ Trailside amenities may be present</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Structures frequent or continuous; may include curbs, handrails, trailside amenities, and boardwalks</li> <li>♦ Drainage structures frequent; may include culverts and road-like designs</li> </ul>

<b>Trail Attributes</b>	<b>Trail Class 1</b> <i>Minimal/Undeveloped Trail</i>	<b>Trail Class 2</b> <i>Simple/Minor Development Trail</i>	<b>Trail Class 3</b> <i>Developed/Improved Trail</i>	<b>Trail Class 4</b> <i>Highly Developed Trail</i>	<b>Trail Class 5</b> <i>Fully Developed Trail</i>
<b>General Criteria</b> Physical Characteristics to be Applied to all Designated Trails					
<b>Signs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum required</li> <li>Generally limited to regulation and resource protection</li> <li>No destination signs present</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum required for basic direction</li> <li>Generally limited to regulation and resource protection</li> <li>Typically very few or no destination signs present</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regulation, resource protection, user reassurance</li> <li>Directional signs at junctions, or when confusion is likely</li> <li>Destination signs typically present</li> <li>Informational and interpretive signs may be present</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wide variety of signs likely present</li> <li>Informational signs likely</li> <li>Interpretive signs possible</li> <li>Trail Universal Access information likely displayed at trailhead</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wide variety of signage is present</li> <li>Information and interpretive signs likely</li> <li>Trail Universal Access information is typically displayed at trailhead</li> </ul>
<b>Typical Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Natural, unmodified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Natural, essentially unmodified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Natural, primarily unmodified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May be modified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can be highly modified</li> <li>Commonly associated with Visitor Centers or high-use recreation sites</li> </ul>

## Appendix E: Special Use Area Designation

**STATE OF ALASKA  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF MINING LAND, AND WATER**

**AMENDED  
KNIK RIVER SPECIAL USE AREA  
(ADL 230206)**

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is establishing a Special Use Area (SUA) to regulate certain activities on four parcels of state land totaling 504 acres. The first parcel is 252 acres of state land within the W½ of section 31, T 17 North, R 3 East, Seward Meridian. The second parcel is 165 acres of land in the E1/2 of section 36, T 17 North, R 2 East, Seward Meridian. The Third parcel is 78 acres of land in the N½ of section 1, T 16 North, R 2 East, Seward Meridian. The fourth parcel is 9 acres of land in the NE¼ of section 2, T 16 North, R 2 East, Seward Meridian. These lands are depicted on the accompanying map titled *Proposed Knik River Special Use Areas*. These lands are hereinafter, referred to as Knik River Special Use Area (KRSUA), adjacent to the boundary of the Knik River Public Use Area (PUA), and created under (AS 41.23.180-230). This SUA creates this area and restricts specific uses on state lands and waters within the designated area.

### **LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

All interests in the uplands in Seward Meridian, Township 17 North, Range 3 East, Section 31, W1/2

### **AUTHORITY**

AS 38.05.020

### **BACKGROUND**

These parcels have been identified for designation as a special use area once they are acquired by the state. The identified parcels are functionally part of the PUA and receive high use levels and impacts associated with use of the PUA. A management plan and regulations have been developed for the PUA, and these regulations manage uses and activities in the PUA and are also applicable to the KRSUA, except for enforcement, which can only occur in the PUA.

The accompanying map illustrates the four parcels that will be included in the KRSUA.

### **PURPOSE**

A SUA is a designation placed on certain land identified as having special resource values(s) needing protection. The result of this designation is to restrict specific activities that would otherwise be considered “generally allowed” under 11 AAC 96.020.

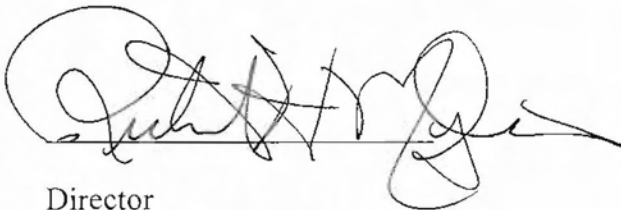
These lands are being designated as the KRSUA because they currently receive high levels of use related to the PUA, have several main access routes into the KRPUA, and receive high levels of impacts related to use of the PUA. The identified lands are located adjacent to the boundary of the KRPUA, and are functionally a part of the PUA. It is the intent of this designation to manage these lands in conjunction with the adjacent Knik River Public Use Area Management Plan to insure comprehensive management of the lands affected by recreational use in the Knik River Valley.

#### **RESTRICTED USES AND ACTIVITIES**

The restrictions detailed in *11AAC 96.015 (d)* and regulations developed subsequent to the adoption of the Management Plan shall also apply to those lands described in the KRSUA.

#### **DESCISION**

I find these actions to be consistent with the Department of Natural Resources management authority, the management intent of the Knik River Public Use Area, the KRPUA Management Plan, and with the draft regulations intended to manage the KRPUA. These actions are in the overall best interest of the State.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John H. [unclear]", written over a horizontal line.

Director  
Division of Mining, Land and Water  
Department of Natural Resources  
State of Alaska

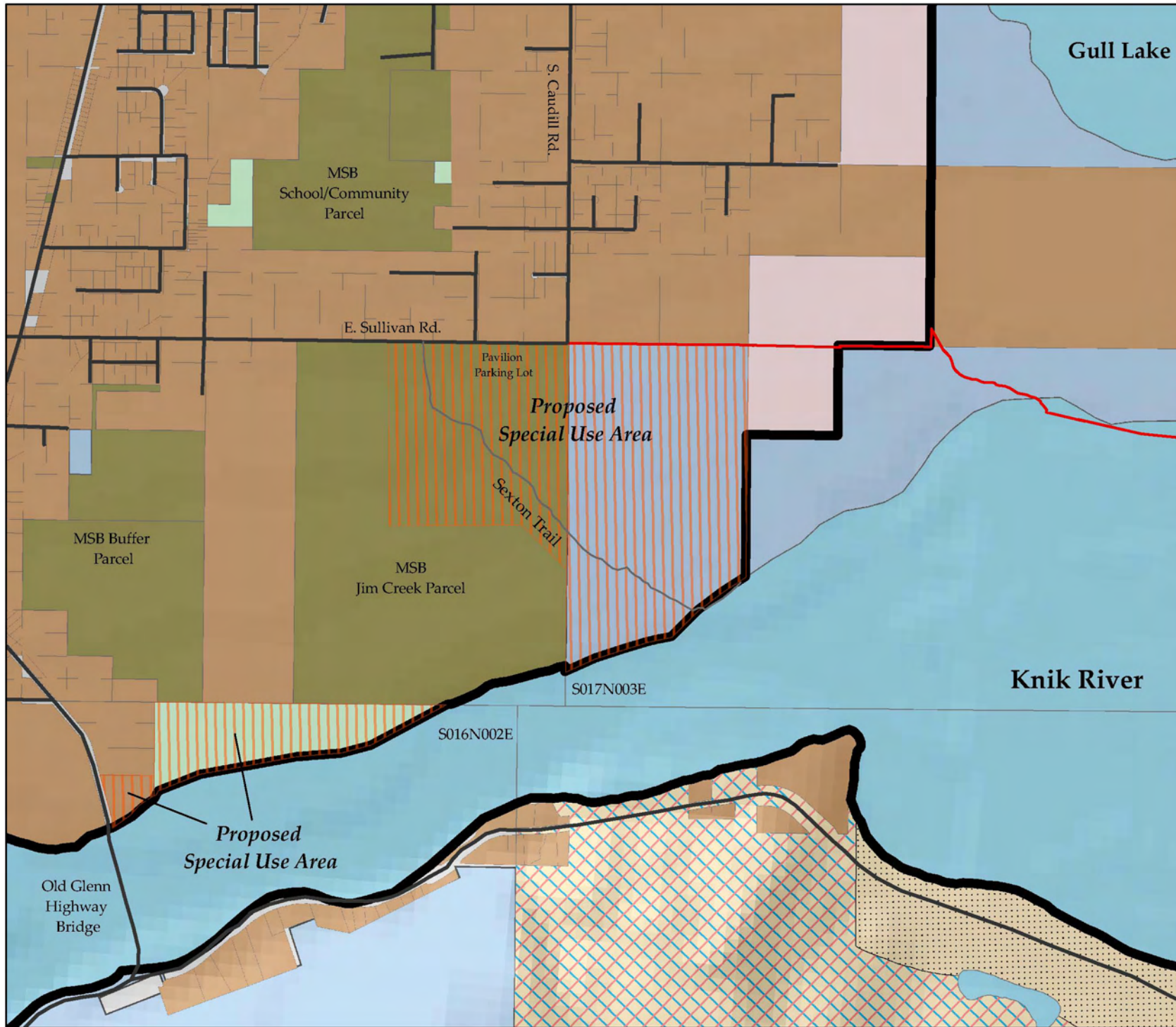
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# Knik River Public Use Area

(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

## Proposed Knik River Special Use Areas

### Map E-1



- KRPUA Legal Boundary
- State Upland
- Proposed SUA Lands
- State Tide, Shore and Submerged Land
- State Selected Land
- Federal Land
- PLO 3324
- Native Land
- Native Selected Land
- Borough Land
- Mental Health Trust Land
- Private Land
- Major Roads
- RS 2477
- Trails



This map is for graphic representation only. It is intended to be used as a guide only and may not show the exact location of existing surveyed parcels or show all easements and reservations. Source documents remain the official record. Land status in general is only to section-level accuracy.

Coordinate System: NAD\_1983\_UTM\_Zone\_6N

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles



## **Appendix F: Plan Amendments**

**(Note: Because two area plans are affected by the Knik PUA Management Plan, both the Susitna Area Plan and the Prince William Sound had to be revised. Both plan amendments follow.)**

**STATE OF ALASKA  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF MINING, LAND AND WATER**

**Susitna Area Plan Amendment  
for  
Knik River Public Use Area  
(LCO SC-07-002)**

**Background**

The Susitna Area Plan (SAP) was adopted in June 1985 and has guided the management of State land throughout much of the Susitna and Matanuska Valleys, including portions of the Knik River area, since that time. In 2006 the Knik River Public Use Area (PUA), encompassing approximately 148,895 acres of State land, was established as a Legislative Designated Area under AS 41.23.180-230. This legislation required the preparation of a management plan by the DNR Commissioner, the intent of which is to provide a detailed management strategy for State land within the PUA.

The boundary of the PUA overlaps portions of the Glenn Highway Subregion (Units 2e, 3b, 3c) and the Chugach Subregion (Units 1a, and 1d) of the SAP. Because the PUA provides a more detailed approach to state land management in this area and because the legislature intended for the PUA to guide state land and resource management in this area, it is appropriate to amend the SAP. The PUA management plan will function as a state land use plan in this area as well as provide an overall management approach to the use and management of State land. That is, the Knik River Public Use Area Management Plan (Plan) is to provide both the area management policies and management guidelines that are typically contained in Chapter 2 of such plans and the plan designations and management intent statements that are characteristic of Chapter 3.

In addition to this amendment, portions of the Prince William Sound Area Plan (PWSAP) overlap with the boundary of the PUA. The PWSAP will be amended concurrently with this Plan Amendment.

This amendment does not affect Leasehold Location Orders or Mineral Orders in place before the enactment of the PUA. Land Classification Order SC-07-002 accompanies this Amendment, reclassifying the entirety of the PUA area to the co-designation of Public Recreation Land and Wildlife Habitat Land.

**Current Plan Requirements**

Within the SAP the Glenn Highway and Chugach Subregions are currently designated Public Recreation and Wildlife Habitat. The SAP management intent recommends that these areas be managed to protect and improve public recreation opportunities while protecting the general quality of fish, waterfowl and wildlife habitat. A portion of the affected areas is recommended for legislative designation as state recreation area.

**Proposed Amendment**

The boundary of the SAP is amended to exclude those lands that are within the SAP (Glenn Highway Subregion, Units 2e, 3b, 3c and Chugach Subregion, Units 1a, and 1d) that coincide with lands in the PUA. The lands within these townships are now part of the PUA. Where the Plan overlaps the SAP (Glenn Highway Subregion, Units 2e, 3b, 3c and Chugach Subregion, Units 1a, and 1d), this amendment rescinds all current SAP land use plan requirements and recommendations, and functions as the land use plan under AS 38.04.065 for this area.

The management intent, plan designations, and management guidelines for these lands is described in detail within the Plan; this management plan shall function as the management strategy for these lands.

LCO SC-07-002 classifies land within the PUA as Public Recreation and Wildlife Habitat. Reclassification is necessary since this Plan will function as a state land use plan as well as the management plan. This LCO is based upon the plan designations contained in the Plan, which co-designates state land as Public Recreation-Dispersed and Habitat.

### **Alternatives Considered**

Two alternatives were considered in the drafting of this amendment:

- A. Null Alternative – status quo. The SAP would continue to be used as the guiding management document for the PUA.
- B. Amendment of SAP as outlined by this plan amendment. This alternative will provide more detailed management guidance to the Department in decisions for the PUA.

### **Recommendation**

Alternative B is the preferred course of action. The amendment to the SAP is necessary to clarify and direct the specific management of PUA lands. Alternative A has been given due consideration and has been determined not to provide the necessary management directions necessary for the PUA under AS 41.23.230.

### **Evaluation of AS 38.05.065 (b) Requirements**

This section of Statute requires that certain factors be considered as part of a plan ‘revision’. These factors have all been considered and are summarized as follows:

*Multiple Use and Sustained Yield:* Multiple Use and sustained yield, as stipulated in AS 41.23.230, has been given due consideration in this amendment. A detailed analysis can be found in the main body of the PUA plan.

*Evaluation of physical, economic, and social factors:* A thorough evaluation of these factors has taken place as a primary aspect of the development of the PUA plan and this amendment.

*Planning and Classification for Settlement:* Settlement has been determined to not be compatible with AS 41.23.230. Settlement of any portion of the PUA would create potential conflicts of surface uses and goes against the legislative directives.

*Land Inventory:* A land inventory was prepared as part of this plan amendment and as part of the PUA. Land Status maps as well as accompanying land statistics can be found in the Knik River Public Use Area Management Plan.

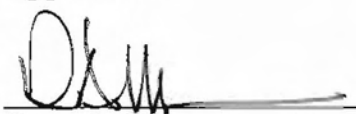
*Alternative Present and Future Uses:* These uses were considered as part of the directive in AS 41.23.230. This area has been designated as a public use area by the legislature.

*Adjacent non-state lands:* The adjacent lands include private, borough, federal, and native lands. All of the adjacent land uses have been considered and deemed compatible and all adjacent land owners have been invited to participate in the planning process.

*Potential Conflicts between mining and surface uses:* Several recreational mining claims are within the PUA. These uses are compatible with, and will not be excluded by, the management plan. After analysis of the minerals and mineral potential in the area, and discussion with DNR Mining Section, it has been determined that there is no commercial potential for mining within this area. There are no foreseen conflicts of uses in this regard.

*Public Participation:* the public is being given several opportunities to comment on this proposal in conjunction with the proposed PUA management plan.

**Approved**



Commissioner  
Department of Natural Resources  
State of Alaska

Date

Sept. 25, 2008

**STATE OF ALASKA  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF MINING, LAND AND WATER**

**Prince William Sound Area Plan Amendment  
for  
Knik River Public Use Area  
(LCO SC-07-002)**

**Background**

The Prince William Sound Area Plan (PWSP) was adopted in June 1988 and has guided the management of State land throughout the Prince William Sound area since that time. In 2006 the Knik River Public Use Area (PUA), encompassing 148,895 acres of State land, was established as a Legislative Designated Area under AS 41.23.180-230. This legislation required the preparation of a management plan by the DNR Commissioner, the intent of which is to provide a detailed management strategy for State land within the PUA.

The boundary of the PUA overlaps Management Unit 6, the “Lake George” area, of the PSWP. Because the PUA provides a more detailed approach to state land management in this area and because the legislature intended for the PUA to guide state land and resource management in this area, it is appropriate to amend the boundary of the PWSP. The PUA management plan will function as a state land use plan in this area as well as provide an overall management approach to the use and management of State land. That is, the PUA Management Plan is to provide both the area management policies and management guidelines that are typically contained in Chapter 2 of such plans and the plan designations and management intent statements that are characteristic of Chapter 3.

In addition to this amendment, portions of the Susitna Area Plan (SAP) overlap with the boundary of the PUA. The SAP will be amended concurrently with this Plan Amendment.

This amendment does not affect Leasehold Location Orders or Mineral Orders in place before the enactment of the PUA. Land Classification Order SC-07-002 accompanies this Amendment, reclassifying the entirety of the PUA area to the co-designation of Public Recreation Land and Wildlife Habitat Land.

**Proposed Amendment**

The boundary of the PWSP is amended to exclude those lands that are within Management Unit 6 Lake George Unit (S15N06E, S15N05E, and S15N04E) that coincide with lands in the PUA. The lands within these townships are now part of the PUA. Where the Plan overlaps Management Unit 6 Lake George Unit (S15N06E, S15N05E, and S15N04E), this amendment rescinds all current PWSAP land use plan requirements and recommendations, and functions as the land use plan under AS 38.04.065 for this area.

The management intent, plan designations, and management guidelines for these lands is described in detail within the Plan; this management plan shall be the guiding management document for these lands.

SC-07-002 classifies land within the PUA as Public Recreation and Wildlife Habitat. Reclassification is necessary since this Plan will function as a state land use plan as well as the management plan. This LCO is based upon the plan designations contained in the PUA, which co-designates state land as Public Recreation-Dispersed and Habitat.

### **Alternatives Considered**

Two alternatives were considered in the drafting of this amendment:

- A. Null Alternative – status quo. The PWSP would continue to be used as the guiding management document for the three townships that now are within the PUA.
- B. Amendment of the PWSP boundary as outlined by this plan amendment. This alternative will provide more detailed management guidance to the Department in decisions for the PUA.

### **Recommendation**

Alternative B is the preferred course of action. The amendment to the PWSP boundary is necessary to clarify and direct the specific management of PUA lands. Alternative A has been given due consideration and has been determined not to provide the management directions necessary for the PUA under AS 41.23.230.

### **Evaluation of AS 38.05.065 (b) Requirements**

This section of Statute requires that certain factors be considered as part of a plan ‘revision’. These factors have all been considered and are summarized as follows:

*Multiple Use and Sustained Yield:* Multiple Use and sustained yield, as stipulated in AS 41.23.230, has been given due consideration in this amendment. A detailed analysis can be found in the main body of the PUA plan.

*Evaluation of physical, economic, and social factors:* A thorough evaluation of these factors has taken place as a primary aspect of the development of the PUA plan and this amendment.

*Planning and Classification for Settlement:* Settlement has been determined to not be compatible with AS 41.23.230. Settlement of any portion of the PUA would create potential conflicts of surface uses and goes against the legislative directives.

*Land Inventory:* A land inventory was prepared as part of this plan amendment and as part of the PUA. Land Status maps as well as accompanying land statistics can be found in the appendix of the PUA plan.



*Appendix F: Plan Amendments*


*Alternative Present and Future Uses:* These uses were considered as part of the directive in AS 41.23.230. This area has been designated as a public use area by the legislature.

*Adjacent non-state lands:* The adjacent lands include private, borough, federal, and native lands. All of the adjacent land uses have been considered and deemed compatible and all adjacent land owners have been invited to participate in the planning process.

*Potential Conflicts between mining and surface uses:* Several recreational mining claims are within the PUA. These uses are compatible with, and will not be excluded by, the management plan. After analysis of the minerals and mineral potential in the area, and discussion with DNR Mining Section, it has been determined that there is no commercial potential for mining within this area. There are no foreseen conflicts of uses in this regard.

*Public Participation:* the public is being given several opportunities to comment on this proposal in conjunction with the proposed PUA management plan.

**Approved**

  
Commissioner  
Department of Natural Resources  
State of Alaska

Date Sept. 25, 2008

**STATE OF ALASKA  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF MINING, LAND AND WATER**

**LAND CLASSIFICATION ORDER  
NO. SC-07-002**

- I. Name: Knik River Public Use Area Management Plan within the former area of the Susitna Area Plan and Prince William Sound Area Plans.
- II. The classifications in Part III are based on written justification contained in the adopted Knik River Public Use Area Management Plan and the plan amendments to the Susitna Area Plan and the Prince William Sound Area Plan dated 1985 & 1988:

Area Plan: Susitna Area Plan and prince William Sound Area Plan (Specifically, the former areas within these area plans that are now managed under the Knik River Public Use Area Management Plan.)

Adopted (X) Revised ( ) Dated 1985 & 1988

Management Plan: Knik River Public Use Area Management Plan

Adopted (X) Revised ( ) Dated August 13, 2008

Site Specific Plan:

Adopted ( ) Revised ( ) Dated \_\_\_\_\_

III. Legal Description	Acreage	Acquisition Authority	Existing Classification	Classification by this action
See plan maps <sup>1</sup>	268,000		<b>Public Recreation Habitat and Harvest Resource Management</b>	<b>Public Recreation Wildlife Habitat</b>

- IV. This order is issued under the authority granted by AS 38.04.065 and AS 38.05.300 to the Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources. The above described lands are hereby designated and classified as indicated. All previous classifications are superceeded by this LCO. Nothing shall prevent the reclassification of these lands if warranted in the public interest.

Classified: 

Commissioner, Department of Natural Resources

Date: Sept. 25, 2008

<sup>1</sup> (Note: 'plan maps' refer to the maps in the Knik River Public Use Area Management Plan)

## **Appendix H: Public Trust Doctrine**

The Public Trust Doctrine provides that public trust lands, waters and living 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. Each state has the authority and responsibility for managing these public trust assets to assure the public rights are upheld.

The Public Trust Doctrine applies whenever navigable waters or the lands beneath those waters are altered, developed, conveyed, or otherwise managed. It also applies whether the trust lands are publicly or privately owned. Public trust lands are generally those lands below navigable waters, with the upper boundary being the ordinary high water mark. Tidelands, shore lands of navigable lakes and rivers, as well as the land beneath oceans, lakes and rivers are usually considered public trust lands.

The Alaska Constitution contains numerous provisions embracing principles of the Public Trust Doctrine that require the state to exercise authority to ensure that the right of the public to use navigable waters for navigation, commerce, recreation, and related purposes is protected. In Alaska, the Public Trust Doctrine extends beyond those submerged lands in which the state holds title to include all waters that are navigable. The state's waters are themselves reserved to the people for common use.

The Alaska Constitution (Article VIII, sections 1, 2, 3, 6, 13, and 14) and Alaska Statutes (38.05.127 and 38.05.128) contain some of the provisions, which are the legal basis for applying the Public Trust Doctrine in Alaska. In Alaska, this doctrine guarantees the public's right to engage in activities such as commerce, navigation, fishing, hunting, trapping, and swimming, while also providing for the protection of areas for ecological study.

The Alaska Constitution provides that “free access to the navigable or public waters of the state, as defined by the legislature, shall not be denied any citizen of the United States or resident of the state, except that the legislature may by general law regulate and limit such access for other beneficial uses or public purposes.” The Alaska Supreme Court has concluded “the provisions in Article VIII [of the Constitution] were intended to permit the broadest possible access to and use of state waters by the general public.” *Wernberg v. State*, 516 P. 2d 1191, 1198-9 (Alaska 1973). The Alaska legislature has broadly defined the navigable and public waters available for public use in AS 38.05.965. Moreover, the legislature has endorsed a broad interpretation of the Public Trust Doctrine constitutionalized in Article VIII in finding that:

- “Ownership of land bordering navigable or public waters does not grant an exclusive right to the use of the water and any rights of title to the land below the ordinary high water mark are subject to the rights of the people of the state to use and have access to the water for recreational purposes or any other public purposes for which the water is used or capable of being used consistent with the public trust.” Sec. 1, Ch. 82, SLA 1985.
- The legislature has also declared that the right to use state waters does not include the right to enter or trespass upon private lands. Nevertheless, with 99 percent of Alaska in public ownership at statehood, state laws providing that the transfer of land to private parties also provide for public access to navigable waters have had broad effect. For instance, AS 38.05.127 implements the state constitutional guarantee of access to navigable waters under Article VIII, Section 14. Under the statute, the Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Natural Resources must “provide for the specific easements or rights-of-way necessary to ensure free access to and along the body of water, unless the Commissioner finds that regulating or eliminating access is necessary for other beneficial uses or public purposes”. The State’s responsibilities to implement the Public Trust Doctrine are considered and used throughout this plan. Any management actions will be consistent with the Public Trust Doctrine as defined by the Alaska Constitution, statutes, court decisions, and public involvement.

These statutes and concepts are considered and used throughout this plan. Any management actions will be consistent with the public trust doctrine as defined by the Alaska Constitution, statutes, court decisions, and public involvement.

## **Appendix I: Legislation**

Sec. 41.23.180. Purpose of AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230.

The purpose of AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230 is to establish the area described in AS 41.23.230 as the Knik River Public Use Area. The Knik River Public Use Area is established to

- (1) perpetuate and enhance
  - (A) general public recreation;
  - (B) public enjoyment of fish and wildlife;
- (2) protect and maintain migratory waterfowl nesting areas; habitats for moose, Dall sheep, and brown bear; and other fish and wildlife habitat so that traditional public use of fish and wildlife populations may continue;
- (3) provide an area for the public to enjoy the full spectrum of public uses, including maintenance and enhancement of off-road motorized vehicle and nonmotorized recreational opportunities;
- (4) allow
  - (A) continued motorized access for miners and owners of private property in the Knik River Public Use Area; and
  - (B) additional public uses of the area determined by the commissioner to be compatible with this section.

Sec. 41.23.190. Management.

- (a) The commissioner is responsible for the management of the land and mineral estate within the Knik River Public Use Area consistent with the purposes of AS 41.23.180. After adequate public hearings, the commissioner may designate incompatible uses and shall adopt and may revise a management plan for the Knik River Public Use Area. The management plan must include provisions for the enforcement of the plan and compliance with the requirements of the plan.
- (b) The commissioner of fish and game, the Board of Fisheries, and the Board of Game are responsible for the management of fish and game resources and public use of fish and wildlife in the Knik River Public Use Area consistent with the purposes of AS 41.23.180

- (c) The Knik River Public Use Area may not be managed as a unit of the state park system.
- (d) The commissioner shall identify wetland areas within the Knik River Public Use Area and provide for the protection and use of the wetland areas in the management plan.

Sec. 41.23.200. Incompatible uses.

- (a) Except as provided in this section, the commissioner may prohibit or restrict uses determined to be incompatible with the purposes of the Knik River Public Use Area under AS 41.23.180 within the state-owned land and water described in AS 41.23.230.
- (b) Nothing in AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230 prohibits the Department of Fish and Game from engaging in rehabilitation, enhancement, and development of fish and wildlife habitat within an area described in AS 41.23.230 that is consistent with the purposes stated in AS 41.23.180.
- (c) The commissioner may not restrict
  - (1) lawful fishing, hunting, or trapping rights allowed under a regulation of the Board of Fisheries or the Board of Game in the Knik River Public Use Area; or
  - (2) the use of weapons, including firearms, in the Knik River Public Use Area except in locations where the commissioner determines that the use of weapons constitutes a threat to public safety.
- (d) The commissioner shall
  - (1) allow the Knik River Public Use Area to be used for activities that are compatible with the reasons for establishing the public use area in AS 41.23.180 and include all-terrain vehicles, aircraft, watercraft, airboats, snowmobiling, horseback riding, hiking, bicycling, dog sledding, cross-country skiing, skijoring, camping, hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, photography, and, where permitted, mineral exploration and mining; and
  - (2) recognize the existing off-road motor vehicle trails and the access those trails provide to areas in the Knik River Public Use Area, make accommodations that will provide the shortest possible route to avoid critical habitat, conduct trail rehabilitation in a way that minimizes damage, maintain and enhance off-road motor vehicle options and opportunities in the Knik River Public Use Area, and provide for increased use of the public use area.
- (e) The commissioner of public safety and the commissioner of fish and game shall have necessary access for fish and game management, research, and enforcement purposes.



Sec. 41.23.210. Enforcement authority.

- (a) In the Knik River Public Use Area described in AS 41.23.230 , the following persons are peace officers of the state for the purpose of enforcing the provisions of AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230 and regulations adopted under AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230:
  - (1) an employee of the department or other person authorized by the commissioner;
  - (2) a peace officer, as that term is defined in AS 01.10.060.
- (b) A person designated in (a) of this section may, when enforcing the provisions of AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230 or a regulation adopted under AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230,
  - (1) execute a warrant or other process issued by an officer or court of competent jurisdiction;
  - (2) administer or take an oath, affirmation, or affidavit; and
  - (3) arrest a person who violates a provision of AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230 or a regulation adopted under AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230.

Sec. 41.23.220. Penalty.

- (a) A person who violates a provision of AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230 or a regulation adopted under AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230 is guilty of a violation as defined in AS 11.81.900 .
- (b) The supreme court shall establish by order or rule a schedule of bail amounts for violations under (a) of this section that allow the disposition of a citation without a court appearance.

Sec. 41.23.230. Knik River Public Use Area.

Subject to valid existing rights, state-owned land and water and the state land and water acquired in the future that lie within the boundaries described in this section are designated as the Knik River Public Use Area, are reserved for all uses compatible with their primary function as public use land, and are assigned to the department for control and management:

- (1) Township 15 North, Range 4 East, Seward Meridian;
- (2) Township 15 North, Range 5 East, Seward Meridian;
- (3) Township 15 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian;

(4) Township 15 North, Range 7 East, Seward Meridian

Section 3: NW1/4NW1/4

Section 4: N1/2NE1/4, N1/2NW1/4

Section 5: N1/2NE1/4, NW1/4

Section 6: SW1/4SE1/4, N1/2SE1/4, SW1/4, N1/2

Section 7: SW1/4NW1/4, N1/2NW1/4;

(5) Township 16 North, Range 2 East, Seward Meridian

Section 1: Portions located below the ordinary high water of Knik River

Section 2: Portions located below the ordinary high water of Knik River

Section 3: Portions located below the ordinary high water of Knik River;

(6) Township 16 North, Range 3 East, Seward Meridian

Sections 1 - 3

Section 4: Portions located below the ordinary high water of Knik River

Section 5: Portions located below the ordinary high water of Knik River

Section 6: Portions located below the ordinary high water of Knik River

Section 9: Portions located below the ordinary high water of Knik River

Section 10: Portions located below the ordinary high water of Knik River

Sections 11 - 13

Section 14: Portions located below the ordinary high water of Knik River

Section 23: Portions located below the ordinary high water of Knik River

Section 24: Portions located below the ordinary high water of Knik River;

(7) Township 16 North, Range 4 East, Seward Meridian;

(8) Township 16 North, Range 5 East, Seward Meridian;

(9) Township 16 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian;

(10) Township 16 North, Range 7 East, Seward Meridian

Section 6: NW1/4SE1/4, S1/2SE1/4, W1/2

Section 7

Sections 17 - 20

Section 28: NW1/4SW1/4, S1/2SW1/4

Sections 29 - 32

Section 33: S1/2NE1/4, SE1/4, W1/2

Section 34: SE1/4SW1/4, W1/2SW1/4;

(11) Township 17 North, Range 2 East, Seward Meridian

Section 36: Portions located below the ordinary high water of Knik River;

(12) Township 17 North, Range 3 East, Seward Meridian

Sections 1 - 5

Sections 9 - 16

Section 17: S1/2

Sections 20 - 29

Section 31: NE1/4NE1/4, S1/2NE1/4, SE1/4, SW1/4 located below the ordinary high water of Knik River

Sections 32 - 36;

(13) Township 17 North, Range 4 East, Seward Meridian;

(14) Township 17 North, Range 5 East, Seward Meridian;

(15) Township 17 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian;

(16) Township 18 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian.

## **Appendix J: Implementation of Commercial Use Policy**

A land use authorization from the Southcentral Regional Land Office of the Division of Mining, Land, and Water will be required for commercial use activities taking place within the PUA. Commercial use includes guiding, outfitting, tours, and rental services. Commercial use also includes the solicitation or selling of liquids or edibles for human consumption, and vending of goods, wares, services, or merchandise. Possession of a commercial recreation authorization does not grant a preference right for obtaining future authorizations nor for obtaining land use permits, leases, or other types of permits. Authorizations are non-transferable.

### **Considerations for Issuing Commercial Use Authorizations**

DNR will consider the following criteria before issuing a commercial authorization.

1. Public use values in the Knik River Public Use Area will be maintained and protected;
2. Public safety, health, and welfare will not be adversely affected;
3. The activity is consistent with the goals and management intent of the plan; and recreational and natural resources will not be adversely affected.

### **Grounds for Suspension or Revocation**

The following is a list of violations which may result in the revocation or suspension of an authorization.

The following may result in suspension or revocation of a commercial authorization.

1. Violation within the Knik River Public Use Area of laws or regulations protecting public safety and peace
2. Violation of state or federal fish or game regulations
3. Repeated or willful non-compliance with authorization requirements
4. Failure to pay required fees

## **Allocation**

DNR will not limit the number of commercial use authorizations, unless an assessment of the commercial use warrants such a decision and if adequate justification for such an action is found to exist. DNR will monitor commercial use and may determine if limitations are appropriate for the future.

## **Commercial Camps**

Commercial use involving overnight camps must have a land use authorization. A land use authorization provides a guide/outfitter with an authorization to establish a camp at a variety of locations throughout the PUA. Commercial camps generally serve as a center for commercial operations, providing overnight accommodations for guests, guides, and employees. Camps generally include tents for shelter and cooking, and a human waste disposal system. Commercial camps do not include resource management camps or mining camps.

The following guidelines apply to commercial camps on state land.

1. *Term of Use* – A land use permit will be issued for the term of actual use of the camp for the authorized activity, or the minimum length of time required by the applicant to carry out the intended use. Land use permits provide authorization on an annual basis, and in some cases for up to five years. Camps located in Public Use Sites may remain in one place for up to seven days before they must be disassembled and moved to another location at least one mile away. They are not allowed to return to the vacated site for a period of four days. Long term commercial camps will not be authorized in public use sites.
2. *Commercial Use* – Land use permits authorize overnight commercial camps within the Knik River Public Use Area. Land use permit will not be authorized for personal camps.
3. *Siting Criteria* – Camps will be sited consistent with the management intent for the unit. In order to protect public safety, minimize the negative impacts on water quality and public access, and to protect heritage sites, commercial camps will not be authorized:
  - A. in Public Use Sites if operating for more than seven (7) days;
  - B. within 100 feet of a waterbody or wetland;
  - C. near identified heritage sites;
  - D. if they block public easements, heavily used trails identified in the TMP, or seismic lines.

## **Fees**

DNR has established fees for authorizations related to commercial use and will apply these to land authorizations within the PUA. The cost of the permit shall be based on the following:

- **Commercial Day Use Activity.** All commercial businesses using the Knik River Public Use Area on a day use only basis must obtain a land use authorization, and will be charged an annual fee, plus a Visitor Day fee.
- **Commercial Camp Activity.** All commercial businesses using the Knik River Public Use Area on a multiple day overnight basis that utilizes overnight camps must obtain a land use authorization, and will be charged an annual fee, plus a Visitor Day fee.