

Susitna Basin Recreation Rivers Management Plan

Public Review Draft – Summary of Changes

January 2024



This document is a summary of the major plan changes but is not inclusive of all of the changes to the plan. Please consult the plan text for details.

CHAPTER 1: Introduction & Background

Description of the Planning Area

- Figures updated.

Resources and Uses in the Area

- Removed this section because it was duplicative of information contained in Chapters 2 & 3.

Why this Plan was Developed

- Text updated to reflect current conditions.

How this Plan was Developed

- Updated text to reflect current planning effort.
- Clarified planning process outline.

Planning for State & Borough Land

- Removed section. Information contained elsewhere in plan.

Summary of Plan Implementation & Modification

- Removed section. Information contained elsewhere in plan.

Summary of Changes to Major Plan Proposals

- Removed section. This section was developed as part of the original planning effort to address issues relevant to creating the original plan.

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CHAPTER 2: Areawide Land & Water Management Policies

Regulations

- Updated to include current regulations.

Public Use Sites & Special Management Areas

- Updated figures.

Riparian Management Areas

- Clarified language on Water Quality.

Upland Development

- Updated language under Unauthorized Cabins to meet current DNR practices.
- Updated language under Utilities to meet modern best management practices.

Shoreline Development

- Updated Management Guidelines to meet modern best management practices.
- Updated Types of Development to meet modern best management practices.
- Updated the Floating Docks section to allow for specific lake conditions (such as low water levels) to be considered when permitting docks. Also updated section to meet modern best management practices.
- Removed existing Erosion Control Projects, Docks, Ladders, Walkways... section on developments that existed before the original 1991 was adopted.
- Updated Stream Crossings section to meet modern best management practices.

Recreation

- Updated Management Guidelines to include promulgated regulations.
- Updated Volunteers section to include more potential volunteer opportunities.
- Updated Crowding and Use Limits section to reflect current conditions.

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Fish & Wildlife Habitat

- Updated Management Guidelines to include current language on U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service guidance on bald eagles.
- Added a section on Invasive Species Concerns to address issues with the aquatic invasive plant Elodea and invasive northern pike.
- Removed the section on Grazing to reflect current conditions.

Commercial

- Updated Management Guidelines to include promulgated regulations.
- Removed In-kind Services & Accounting for Revenues sections to reflect current DNR practices.
- Updated the Lodges section to reflect current conditions.
- Updated Commercial Camps section to include promulgated regulations and to reflect current DNR practices.

General Access

- Updated Management Guidelines to include promulgated regulations and to reflect current DNR practices.

Boat Access

- Updated Erosion and Other Environment Impacts section to reflect recent studies on the effects of jetboats on fish.
- Updated Regulations and Personal Watercraft sections to include promulgated regulations.

Upland Access

- Updated Management Guidelines section on Large Vehicle Use in Winter to include promulgated regulations.
- Updated Roads and Both Types of Vehicular Trails section on Protection of Hydrologic Systems to reflect modern best management practices and minimize slope instability.
- Updated Trails section to reflect the current route of the Iditarod Race Trail.
- Updated the Off-Road Vehicles section to reflect language of promulgated regulations.

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- Removed mention of the Coastal Management Program from the section on Access to Private Land and Mining Locations. This program no longer exists.

Air Access

- Updated Management Guidelines to reflect current conditions.

Water & Solid Waste

- Included additional language in the Litter section on signage at access points for educational purposes.
- Updated Wastewater Disposal Systems section to reflect current regulations.
- Updated Fuel Storage section to meet modern best management practices.
- Updated Instream Flow section to reflect current conditions and DNR practices. Instream Flow Reservations have been established for all river corridors except the Talachulitna River and Alexander Creek. Recommendations to file reservations for these two rivers are included.
- The Water Discharge from Mining Operations section was updated to meet current Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation requirements.

Forestry

- Updated Management Guidelines to include promulgated regulations and to reflect current DNR practices.

Subsurface Resources

- Updated Management Guidelines – Mining to reflect current Mineral Closing Orders and a Leasehold Location Order within the corridors. Also updated information on permitting to reflect current DNR practices.
- Map updated.
- Removed Reclamation of Mine Sites section. Not needed. Already regulated by statute.

Materials

- Updated Existing ADOT/PF Pits section to reflect current materials sites.

Land Status

- Updated Land Acquisition section to reflect current Proposed Additions.

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- The Classifications, Mental Health Trust Lands and University Lands sections were all updated to reflect current conditions.

Heritage Resources

- Updated Management Guidelines to reflect promulgated regulations.
- Updated route of Iditarod National Historic Trail.

Education

- No major updates needed.

Enforcement

- Updated to reflect promulgated regulations.

CHAPTER 3: Land & Water Management Policies for Each Management Unit

Changes throughout the Chapter

- Updated data to reflect current conditions. Examples include: land status, river characteristics, fisheries, sport fishing, special regulations, wildlife, camping, access, development, public use sites, special management areas, among others.
- Technical changes to align management direction with current regulations.
- Removed section on Borough Land classifications. This plan only applies to state land.
- Added sections on subsistence for river corridors.
- Updated all maps.

Little Susitna River Management Unit

- Updated Boating Restrictions section to remove the proposed South Big Lake Road no-wake area since this extension did not occur.

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1a. Lower Little Susitna River Subunit

- Updated Boating Restrictions section to remove the proposed South Big Lake Road no-wake area since this extension did not occur.
- Removed section on Big Lake Road Extension since this extension did not occur.
- Renamed and updated the Additions and Deletions from Recreation Rivers section to Overlap between Management Unit & Nancy Lake State Rec Area section.
- Removed the Nancy Lake Creek Bridge public use site. This is no longer a proposed addition.
- Removed the Special Management Area for the proposed South Big Lake Road Extension since this did not occur.

1c. Upper Little Susitna River Subunit

- Removed section on grazing to reflect current use in the subunit.

Deshka River Management Unit

- Added information on warming water trends.

2i. Upper Moose Creek Subunit

- Updated subunit information to reflect the removal of the Upper Moose Creek proposed addition. This includes the K'da Lake Special Management Area.

Talkeetna River Management Unit

3a. Lower Talkeetna River Subunit

- Removed Boat Launch and Campground Public Use Site and Sheep River Public Use Site.

Lake Creek Management Unit

- Added information on the migration of the mouth of Lake Creek due to a large flood event.
- Updated information on Special Regulations for rainbow trout fishing.

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4a. Lake Creek Mouth Subunit

- Added information on the migration of the mouth of Lake Creek due to a large flood event.

4e. Chelatna Lake Subunit

- Added a Public Use Site at Snowslide Creek.

Talachulitna River Management Unit

5e. Judd Lake Subunit

- Updated Judd Lake Public Use Site to contain shorelands and water column only. Most of the land is now in private or borough ownership.

Alexander Creek Management Unit

- Added a Special Regulations section. Alexander Creek has been designated special management waters.
- Added a section on Invasive Species to address issues in the corridor with Elodea and northern pike.
- Removed Boating Restriction related to the proposed addition at the mouth of Alexander Creek. Land ownership has changed and this is no longer a proposed addition.

6a. Lower Alexander Creek Subunit

- Updated Management Intent to reflect the closure in the Chinook salmon fishery due to impacts from northern pike. Removed information on the proposed addition to the mouth of Alexander Creek. No longer a proposed addition.
- Updated Management Guidelines to remove section on Addition to the Recreation River. No longer a proposed addition due to change in land ownership.
- Removed Alexander Creek Mouth and Granite Creek Public Use Sites. These were within the removed proposed addition.

6b. Upper Alexander Creek Subunit

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- Updated Management Intent to reflect the closure in the Chinook salmon fishery due to impacts from northern pike.

6d. Sucker Creek Subunit

- Added a section on Invasive Species Concerns to address issues in the corridor with Elodea and northern pike.

CHAPTER 4: Implementation

Areas Recommended for Designation as Recreation Rivers

- Removed some proposed additions due to changes in land ownership and use. Retained recommendations to:
 - Correct overlap between Nancy Lake State Rec Area and the Recreation Rivers Corridor.
 - Proposed addition at Mouth of Prairie Creek.

Procedures for Plan Review, Modification, & Amendment

- Technical changes to align management direction with current regulations.

Other Recommendations

- Removed recommendations for Susitna Area Plan Update and Statewide Boating Safety Legislation. These recommendations were completed.

Future Additions

- Removed some proposed additions due to changes in land ownership and use. Retained recommendation for proposed addition at Mouth of Prairie Creek.

Fishing Regulations

- Removed section on Fishing Regulations. No longer a recommendation by Alaska Department of Fish & Game.

Agency Implementation Responsibilities

- Updated implementation responsibilities for each agency based on current and future actions. Added a section for Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation.