

Use Allocation. If use limits are adopted, a use allocation or permit system will need to be developed. Developing a fair and workable permit system will require a number of decisions to be made, many of which depend upon the proposed use limit level, access characteristics, the type of use on the segment, and legal constraints. Extensive discussions with interested groups and the public will be needed. This plan defers specific decisions on any allocation to the time when a permit system is needed. Also see *Commercial, Allocation* in this chapter.

Any use allocation system for the Recreation Rivers should attempt to meet the following objectives:

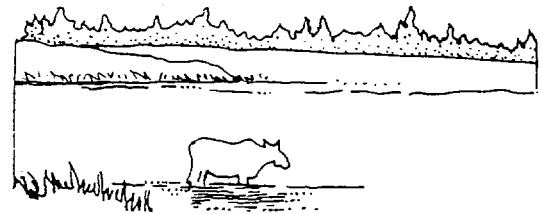
1. Be simple and easy to understand and use;
2. Minimize "no shows" and make unused permits available to other users;
3. Be flexible (allow for reasonable changes in users' plans, group composition, weather, water levels, etc.);

4. Provide stability for guide businesses;
5. Give no preference based solely upon past use of a river;
6. Be responsive to the relative amount of use demanded by the private and commercial sectors; and
7. Be the same procedure for all users.

Other Guidelines Affecting Recreation.

Several other guidelines may affect recreational activities. See the following sections of this chapter.

Shoreline Development	Heritage Resources
Commercial	Education
Upland Access	Enforcement
Water & Solid Waste	Phasing & Interim Management



FISH & WILDLIFE HABITAT

Goals

Sustained Yield. Manage, protect, and maintain fish and wildlife populations and habitat on a sustained-yield basis.

Recreation and Economic Use. Ensure continued recreation and economic use of and enjoyment by the public including activities such as fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, and trapping.

Ensure Access to State Lands and Waters. Ensure access to state lands and waters where appropriate to promote or enhance responsible public use and enjoyment of fish and wildlife resources.

Mitigate Habitat Loss. Avoid or minimize reduction in quality of fish and wildlife habitat where resource development projects occur.

Functional Integrity of Lands. Maintain the functional integrity of land supporting crucial life cycle stages of important fish and wildlife indicator species.

Management Guidelines

Eagles and Timber Harvesting. Under the Forest Resources Practices Act, timber harvesting is prohibited within 330 feet of eagle nesting trees. The Susitna Forestry Guidelines also prohibits forestry activities from March 15 through August 31 within 660 feet of known eagle nesting trees. If a nesting tree is not occupied by June 15, operations can occur between June 15 and August 31 between, 330 feet and 660 feet from the nest tree. Known eagle nests are shown on the plan resource assessment maps.

DNR, DFG, and the USFWS are reviewing existing eagle policies and may develop new statewide guidelines. If new guidelines are adopted by DNR, they can be applied to the Recreation Rivers areas without an amendment to the plan.

USFWS Authority over Eagles. The US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has authority for managing bald eagle populations. To protect bald eagle populations in the Recreation Rivers, USFWS will be notified of all planned timber harvests. Notification will occur through interagency notification of the five-year timber sale schedule and Forest Management Reports for individual sales. Where timber sales contain eagle nesting trees, the Division of Forestry will design the sale in consultation with DFG and USFWS. Nesting sites were mapped by USFWS from their bald eagle surveys and shown on the bald eagle nest site map used to develop the plan. Sites can be added to or deleted from the map based on new information from USFWS eagle surveys or inspection of specific sites. Additions or deletions will be made by DNR in concurrence with DFG and USFWS. Changes to the map will be based on physical characteristics for nesting and evidence of use.

Bears and Garbage. Management efforts will emphasize the prevention of bear/human conflicts.

Bear encounters should be minimized by:

1. Increasing public education on bear behavior, and how to deal with bears and garbage in the wild. This includes brochures, signs, and interpretive displays;
2. Increasing public information about areas of high bear density;
3. Recommending high density bear areas be avoided or temporarily prohibiting public use of such areas;
4. Closing Areas to public use on a temporary basis when there is a high likelihood of bear/human conflicts; and monitoring closed areas to determine when it is appropriate to reopen them;
5. Providing food caches, sealable drums, or bear wires to elevate food in high-use camping areas where there is a history of bear encounters.

Bear/human encounters are most common where bears regularly acquire human food or garbage. Once bears become habituated to human food or garbage, options for management become limited, expensive, ineffective, and unacceptable to some members of the public. To avoid this:

1. State and municipal policies and regulations regarding food storage and garbage disposal should be rigorously enforced. If staff become aware of violations, they should notify the offender and the appropriate enforcement agency. Improper storage of food, disposal of garbage, or a similar attractive nuisance [5 AAC 42.10(a)(1)] will not be considered as a justifiable defense of life or property. Persons who kill a bear that was attracted to improperly stored food or garbage may be subject to prosecution.
2. Large volumes of organic products generated by camps or other facilities that may attract bears shall be incinerated in a facility that meets DEC standards for combustion residue (less than 5 percent unburned combustibles).
3. Existing unauthorized open pit waste disposal sites on state land in the Recreation Rivers shall be closed. Solid waste disposal on state lands in the Recreation Rivers is prohibited.
4. Disposal of garbage from authorized facilities on state lands should be by incineration (daily preferred). Alternatively, garbage can be transported to a DEC-approved regional disposal site or borough waste transfer station. Temporary storage of garbage prior to incineration or backhaul should be in a bear-proof enclosure (building, container, or fence).

State regulations prohibit the feeding of bears and other large predators or intentionally leaving human food or garbage in a manner that attracts animals (5 AAC 92.230). Another state regulation defines a person's rights and responsibilities in defending himself or his property from wild animals (5 AAC 92.410). These regulations give the individual responsibility, guidance, and authority to deal with unavoidable bear/human conflicts. Problem bears can often be shot under normal hunting regulations.

Trumpeter Swan Nesting Areas. In trumpeter swan nesting areas, all land uses that would disturb nesting swans or detrimentally alter nesting habitat will be prohibited from April 1 through August 31 within at least one-quarter mile of waterbodies identified as trumpeter swan nesting sites. Nest sites are identified in the Plan Resource Assessment. The area where seasonal restrictions apply may be increased or decreased if the potential level of damage or disturbance warrants change. This determination will be made by DNR in consultation with DFG and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. If a waterbody that has been used for nesting is not occupied by June 15, potentially disturbing activities may be allowed within the one-quarter mile zone after June 15.

Construction of transmission lines in swan nesting habitat should be avoided. If transmission lines are constructed, they should be sited in forested areas and kept close to treetop level. Wires crossing rivers, marshes, and other open spaces should be marked so that they are visible to swans. Wires should be strung in one horizontal plane rather than in multiple, vertical stacks.

Harvest Regulations on Moose Creek. See Chapter 4, *Other Recommendations, Fishing Regulations*.

Habitat Enhancement. Habitat enhancement activities for fish or wildlife species may occur when biological or population data indicate improvements in survival, reproduction, or population numbers can and need to be increased through habitat enhancement or rehabilitation activities. Enhancement projects will be described in a habitat enhancement plan prepared by DFG and approved by DLW. Also see Chapter 4, *Other Recommendations, Fisheries Enhancement on Lake Creek*.

Moose Habitat Enhancement Moose habitat enhancement activities may only occur in vegetation types where regrowth of preferred moose browse species, including hardwood types is likely. DFG should first enhance areas outside the Recreation Rivers where these conditions can be met. If these conditions cannot be met outside the Recreation Rivers, enhancement may be considered for Class II and III areas and special management areas. If these conditions cannot be met in these areas, enhancement may be considered for Class I areas. Habitat enhancement in

the Recreation Rivers shall be done in a manner that enough undisturbed vegetation is left along the rivers to provide visual screening from enhanced areas. Techniques may include hydroaxing, crushing, burning, and timber harvest, and shall be described in a moose habitat enhancement plan.

Mitigation. When issuing permits or 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 habitat when determining stipulations or measures needed to protect fish and wildlife or their habitats. The costs of mitigation relative to the benefits to be gained will be considered in the implementation of this policy.

All land use activities will be conducted with appropriate planning and implementation to avoid or minimize adverse effects on fish and wildlife or their habitats.

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.

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

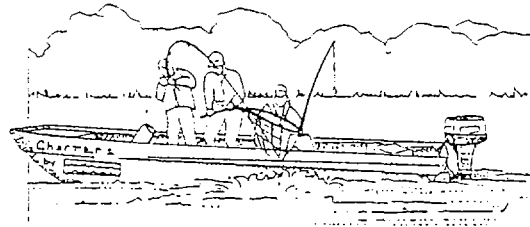
1. Avoid anticipated, significant adverse effects on fish and wildlife or their habitats through siting, timing, or other management options.
2. When significant adverse effects cannot be avoided by design, siting, timing, or other management options, the adverse effect of the use or development will 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 or enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat when steps 1 through 3 cannot avoid

substantial and irreversible loss of habitat. DFG will clearly identify the species affected, the need for replacement or enhancement, and the suggested method for addressing the impact. Replacement 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 AS 38.05.035(e) or the 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.

Grazing. Livestock grazing is prohibited in the Recreation Rivers, except in part of the Upper Little Susitna River Subunit 1c (see Chapter 3). Grazing as an incidental use, such as by pack animals or associated with horse travel, is allowed on state lands without a permit or lease.

Other Guidelines Affecting Fish and Wildlife Habitat. Other guidelines may affect fish and wildlife issues. See the following sections of this chapter.

Upland Development	Forestry
Shoreline Development	Subsurface Resources
Commercial	Materials
Upland Access	Enforcement
Water and Solid Waste	



COMMERCIAL

Goals

Opportunities. Provide a mix of commercial and noncommercial public use opportunities.

Economy. Contribute to the local, regional, and statewide economy.

Generate Revenue. Generate revenue to help manage the rivers.

Standards. Develop standards for commercial operators in order to protect public safety and natural resources.

Conflicts. Reduce apparent conflicts between user groups.

Management Guidelines

Commercial Use Permits. The department shall promulgate regulations which authorize the department to issue annual permits for recreation-related commercial use of state lands, waters, or resources. Permits will be issued annually. A commercial-use permit shall be required of commercial recreational use of state-owned land, water, or resources in the Recreation Rivers. Commercial recreation includes guiding, outfitting, flight, boat shuttle, and rental services or engaging in soliciting, selling, or peddling liquids or edibles for human consumption, or distributing circulars, or hawking, peddling, or vending goods, wares, services, or merchandise within the Recreation Rivers. This includes recreation businesses that may be based on private lands inside the corridors, such as lodges, that use state land or water in the Recreation Rivers. The permit system is intended to meet Recreation Rivers management objectives for protecting and enhancing recreational and natural values, and compensating the state for