

2. *Voluntary no-wake* Along north bank of the Yentna River near the mouth of Lake Creek. area

Season: May 15 - August 20.

Justification: Boat anglers are concentrated near the mouth of Lake Creek during the fishing season. To protect public safety, signs will be placed on a one-year trial basis in this area. The effectiveness of these signs will be evaluated at the end of the trial period. If the signs are found to be effective in protecting public safety, they will be posted during succeeding seasons. Because the Yentna River is so wide, the no-wake area is not intended to apply to most of the southern 3/4 of the Yentna River used for floatplane landings and powerboat travel up and down the main river where wakes are unlikely to be a hazard to fishermen at the mouth of Lake Creek.

4a. Lake Creek Mouth Subunit

Background

MILES OF RIVER/RIVER CHARACTERISTICS, RM 0 to RM 3.5

This subunit extends from the confluence of Lake Creek and the Yentna River to a point just above the outlet of Bulchitna Lake. It also includes Bulchitna Lake shorelands and a one-mile section of the Yentna River. The Yentna River is wide and turbid while Lake Creek is generally clear. Contiguous wetlands make up about half of the uplands in this subunit.

LAND OWNERSHIP

State	2,722 acres
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	4 acres
12 Private Parcels	51 acres
Total	2,777 acres

FISHERIES

Most of the salmon fishing on Lake Creek is within this subunit and centers near the mouth of Lake Creek and the outlet of Bulchitna Lake.

WILDLIFE

Active bald eagle nests have not been sighted in recent surveys of this subunit.

CAMPING

The following undeveloped campsites have been identified in the subunit:

Primary campsites	1
Secondary campsites	10
Marginal campsites	2

DEVELOPMENT

There are four lodges and three cabins in the subunit. One lodge and 26 cabins are adjacent to the subunit. Many of the cabins are used commercially and host at least a few clients every year.

There is a dock at the King Point Lodge and on Bulchitna Lake. Several docks are located just outside the subunit on Fish Lakes and along the Yentna River.

ACCESS

There are several local footpaths and three-wheeler trails associated with lodges, cabins, and public use near the mouth. There are also four section or seismic lines near the mouth. Only one of these appears to be used during the summer. A historic wagon road that runs north from McDougall is located just east of the subunit.

The entire Lake Creek subunit receives ample snowcover during most years. The Iditarod, Iditaski, and Iron Dog Classic races have been run on the Yentna River through this subunit in recent years. Riversong Lodge (adjacent to the subunit) is used as a checkpoint for some of the races. There is extensive winter travel by snowmachine and dog teams during the winter months. The Yentna River is a winter highway for both local residents and recreation users originating from points along the Parks Highway, and Petersville and Knik roads. A series of seismic lines and tractor trails connecting Shulin, Amber, and Trapper lakes is used to transport heavy equipment. In Winter, private property owners and recreational users also travel up the lower part of Lake Creek.

Open water prevents snowmachines from running through the canyon.

Floatplane landing areas in the subunit include Bulchitna Lake and the Yentna River. Floatplanes are often moored along the Yentna River in the subunit. There is one airstrip just upstream from the mouth of Lake Creek on a bar in the Yentna River (outside the subunit) by Lake Creek Lodge.

HERITAGE RESOURCES

The heritage site potential is high. There are historic mining trails, the nearby settlement of McDougall, and signs of historic cabins.

Management Intent

Class III. This subunit receives intense public use in a relatively small area during the king and silver salmon runs. The area with the highest concentration of lodges in or adjacent to and of the Recreation Rivers is at the mouth of Lake Creek. A large proportion of the use is from fly-in commercial use. Bulchitna Lake is a popular fly-in access point for bank fishing. The subunit provides high quality fishing, hunting, and camping opportunities for powerboaters, floaters, and bank users. It also supports salmon spawning and winter moose habitat. There are winter opportunities for snowmachining, dogmushing, and cross-country skiing, particularly along the Yentna River. The subunit will be managed to provide and enhance

recreation opportunities, and fish and wildlife habitat, while accommodating uses associated with private lands. The subunit will be managed to provide opportunities for both motorized and non-motorized use. There are no non-motorized areas in this subunit. A voluntary no-wake area on a trial basis will be established at the mouth to protect public safety in this high-use fishing area.

Borough Lands. Borough lands in this subunit are classified "Borough Land Bank." For management intent on borough lands, contact the Matanuska-Susitna Borough.

Management Guidelines

Boating Restrictions. None.

Iditarod National Historic Trail. A connecting trail from this historic trail passes through the subunit and terminates at McDougall (See Chapter 2 guidelines on *Heritage Resources, Iditarod National Historic Trail*).

Public Access. There is currently no public access between Bulchitna Lake and Lake Creek. The trail currently used crosses private land. DNR will not encourage trespass on private land by marking the trail or trailheads that are on

private land. However, obtaining public access between the Bulchitna Lake and the Lake Creek is a high priority.

Public Information. Because of intense use by bank fishermen, a kiosk should be established near Bulchitna Lake that displays information on the Recreation Rivers. A sign should be established near the mouth of Lake Creek identifying Lake Creek as a Recreation River.

Field Staff Cabin. A cabin for recreation rivers field staff should be constructed near the DFG

camp on the Yentna River. The site may also be used for storage of signs and equipment.

Anchor Buoys. Anchor buoys are allowed at the mouth under the regulations proposed in Chapter 2, *Shoreline Development, Anchor Buoys.*

Public Use Sites

See *Public Use Sites* in Chapter 2 for management guidelines. Specific locations are shown on maps at the end of this unit.

- PU 4a.1 Lake Creek Mouth (RM 0).** This is a heavily used area for fishing and camping. Numerous boats and floatplanes tie up on the banks.
- PU 4a.2 Bulchitna Lake (RM 3.5).** The lake is state owned. The lands around the lake are in borough and private ownership. The trail to the lake and the shorelands along the river adjacent to the lake are heavily used for fishing, camping, hiking, and access to the lake.

4b. Lower Lake Creek Subunit

Background

MILES OF RIVER/RIVER CHARACTERISTICS, RM 3.5 to RM 6.8

This subunit extends from just above Bulchitna Lake to the canyon exit. There are considerable contiguous wetlands in the lower half of the subunit, and no significant wetlands above RM 5.

LAND OWNERSHIP

State	1,962 acres
8 Private Parcels	38 acres
Total	2,000 acres

WILDLIFE

There is a bald eagle nest near the creek at RM 4.

CAMPING

The following undeveloped campsites were identified:

Primary campsites	none
Secondary campsites	numerous
Marginal campsites	numerous

DEVELOPMENT

There is one cabin and a dock on the lake near RM 6.

ACCESS

The Oilwell Trail parallels the subunit on the east side and is used for winter access by snow-machines and cat trains. Floatplanes may access the area on a small lake near RM 6. A trail leads from it to the creek. Winter use is light. Snow-machines are used to access private property. Several seismic lines that cross the subunit are used in the winter.