

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

**Public Review Draft**



March 2008



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

# Knik River Public Use Area Management Plan

## Public Review Draft

Note: To receive full consideration, and to be able to request reconsiderations of a plan adopted by the commissioner, written comments must be received by:

**5:00pm AST, Friday, May 2, 2008**

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March 2008



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Division of Mining, Land and Water  
Resource Assessment and Development Section

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# 1 Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

## 2 Summary of Purpose

3

4 The Knik River Public Use Area Management Plan (Plan) describes how the Alaska  
5 Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will manage state lands within the Knik River  
6 Public Use Area (PUA). The plan also provides specific guidance for the management of  
7 different uses in the PUA, particularly recreation. Since access within the PUA is such an  
8 important issue, the plan includes guidance on the management of present and future trails.  
9 It also outlines a process for addressing trail issues in the future in a more comprehensive  
10 manner. The plan also makes recommendations for facilities such as boat launches, parking  
11 areas and campsites. Draft regulations that apply to the planning area have recently gone  
12 through public review and these are summarized in Appendix C. The plan also proposes  
13 additional regulations that, if promulgated, will provide additional tools for managing the  
14 area. Once signed by the Commissioner, the plan becomes the policy and basis for decision  
15 making by DNR.

16

17

## 18 The Planning Area

19

20 The planning area includes the legal boundary established by statute for the PUA in addition  
21 to four parcels of land adjacent to the PUA. One of these parcels is owned by the state, while  
22 the remaining three are owned by the Matanuska Susitna Borough (MSB), the Mental Health  
23 Trust (MHT), and a private individual. See Map 1-1, pp. 1 - 3 for a depiction of the Plan  
24 boundary and identifies parcels. A Special Use Area (SUA) designation will be proposed for  
25 these identified parcels to provide consistent management with the adjacent PUA land. The  
26 SUA designation will only apply to lands owned by the state.

27

28

## 29 The Public Use Area

30

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

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

6  
 7 **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

8  
 9

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

15  
 16  
 17  
 18  
 19  
 20

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

# Knik River Public Use Area

(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

## Planning Area Map 1-1

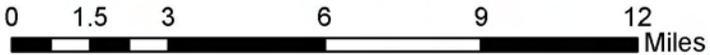
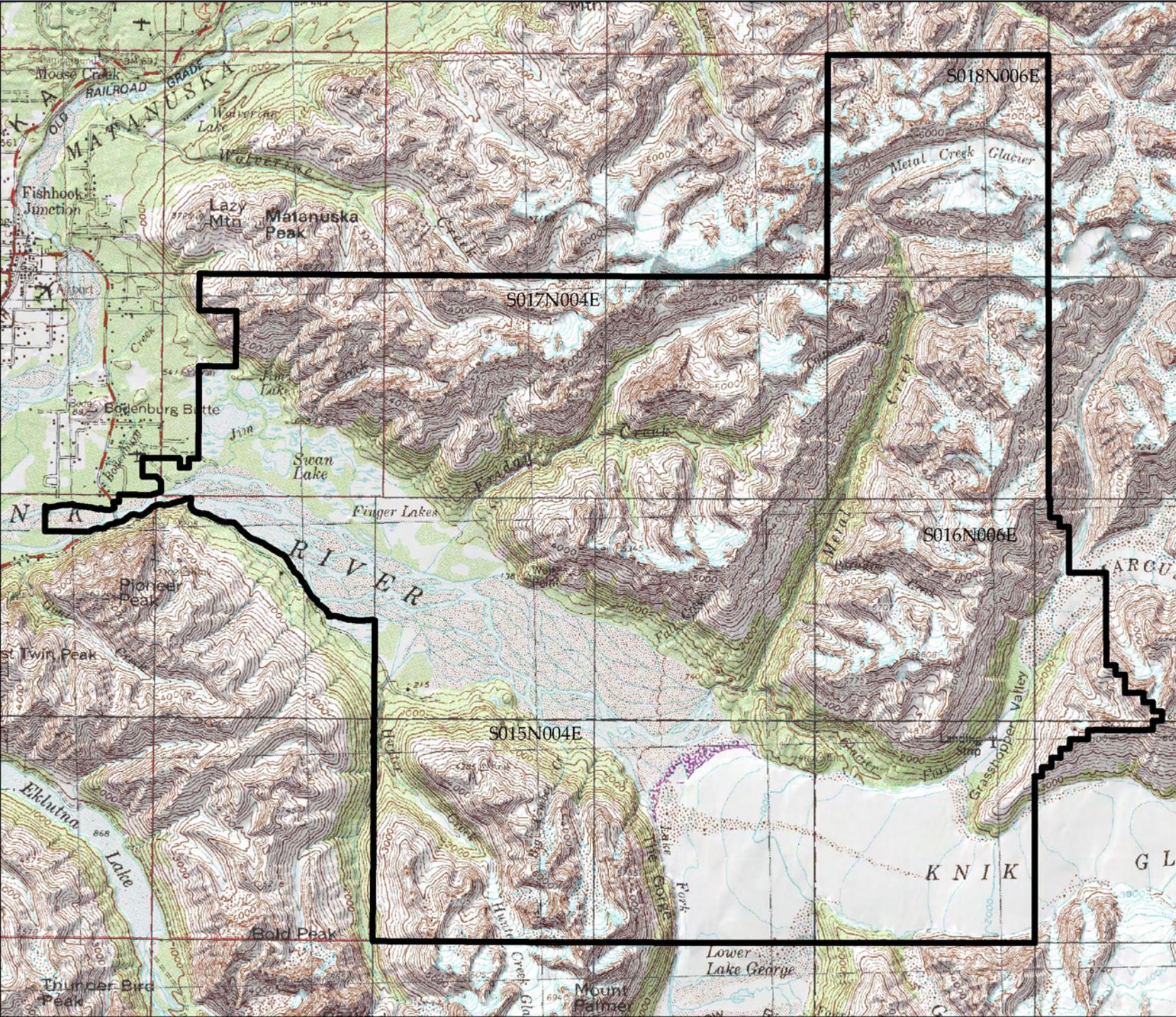
 KRPUA Planning Boundary

### 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

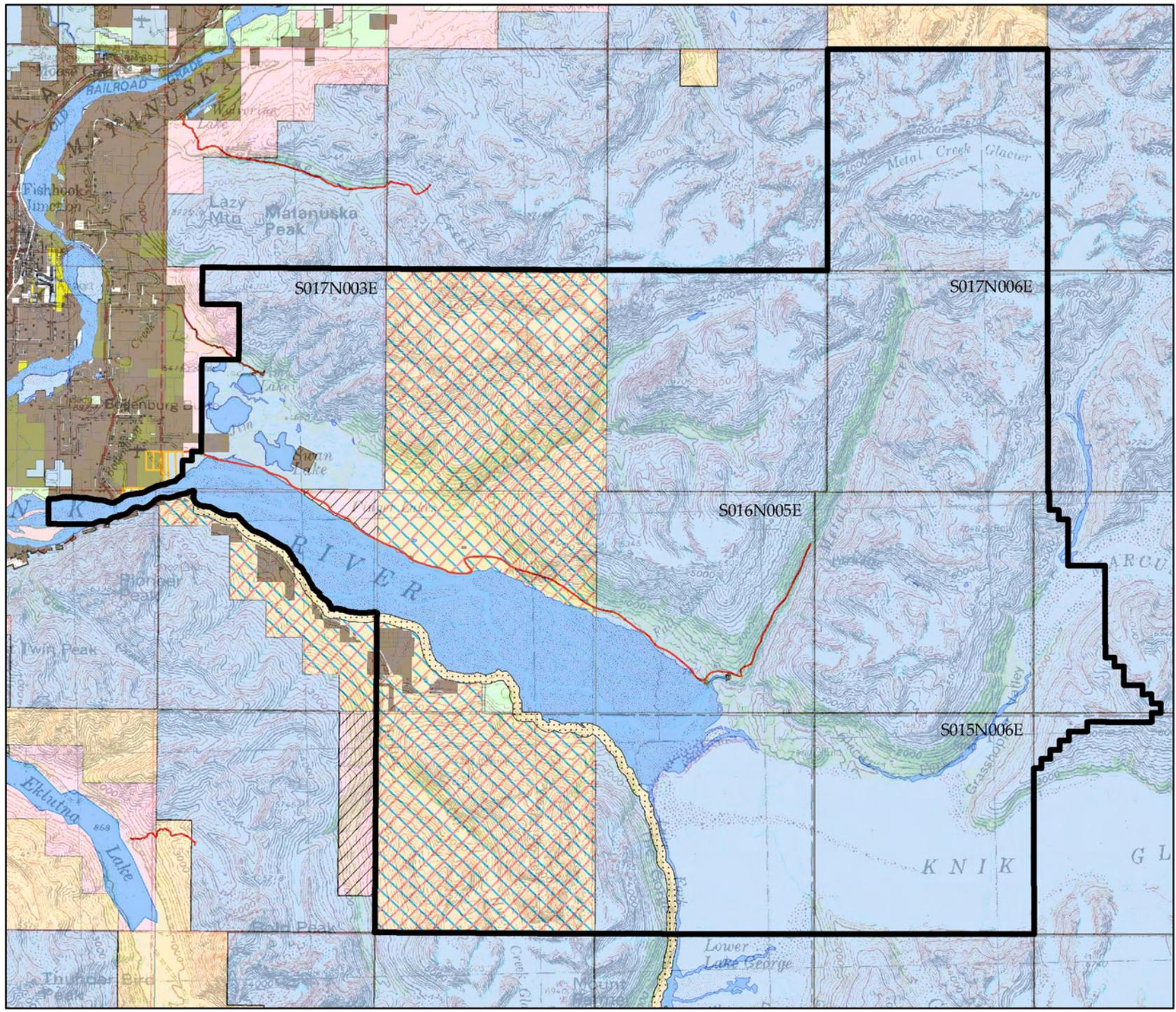


# Knik River Public Use Area

(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

## General Land Status

### Map 1-2

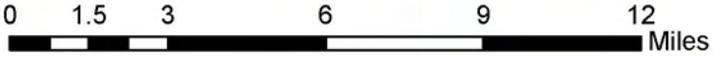


- KRPUA Legal Boundary
- State Upland
- State Selected Land
- Land proposed as SUA
- State Tide, Shore and Submerged Land
- Federal Land
- PLO 3324
- Native Land
- Native Selected Land
- Land Subject to NALA
- Borough Land
- City Land
- Mental Health Trust Land
- Private Land
- RS 2477
- Easements



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



## 1 Why the Draft Plan Was Developed

2  
3 Situated within an hour's drive of almost 50 percent of Alaska's population, the Knik River  
4 valley has received increasing use as the populations of Anchorage and the Matanuska-  
5 Susitna Borough grow. Users are attracted to this area because of its fish and wildlife  
6 populations as well as the diversity of recreational opportunities. With this increasing use,  
7 there is a growing concern about public safety, impacts to fish, wildlife and their habitat and  
8 other natural resources and conflicts between users. Rapidly changing land status in the area  
9 has also raised concerns about the continued availability of access to public lands.

10  
11 Unlawful uses have been increasing in the PUA. Underage drinking, indiscriminate shooting  
12 of firearms, destruction of private and public property, dumping large quantities of trash, and  
13 destruction of automobiles (and other structures) are a few of the unlawful activities  
14 occurring within the PUA regularly.

15  
16 Unlawful activities are creating adverse impacts on the resources and uses within the Area.  
17 Wrecked and burned vehicles discharge petroleum and other hazardous chemicals onto the  
18 ground and into waterbodies. Off highway vehicle (OHV) use within anadromous  
19 waterbodies is occurring where that use is not authorized under state law. Multiple trespass  
20 structures such as cabins, tent platforms, and duck blinds have been constructed. Often these  
21 structures fall into disrepair and create litter throughout the area. Indiscriminate target  
22 shooting is becoming an increasing safety hazard for both users of the area as well as  
23 residents living along the borders of the PUA.

24  
25 In the fall of 2005, meetings were held to discuss proposed legislation that would designate  
26 the Knik River valley and surrounding land as a Public Use Area. A final version of the bill  
27 was passed and signed into law on September 28, 2006 and was codified as AS 41.23.180-  
28 230. The legislation that established the PUA specified its purposes, provided direction for  
29 the management of uses and resources, and directed DNR to develop a plan and regulations  
30 to implement the plan. The underlying purpose of the management plan is to provide  
31 specificity to resource and use management within the PUA. Finally, the legislation granted  
32 enforcement authority to DNR and authorized it to develop penalties for the violation of laws  
33 and regulations that apply to the PUA.

## 34 35 36 How the Draft Plan Was Developed

37  
38 This draft plan was developed following an extensive public involvement process with input  
39 from DNR management and a planning team. The planning team consisted of DNR, ADFG  
40 and MSB representatives.

1 Public meetings were held to educate and inform the public on the PUA and the planning  
2 process. The meetings allowed the public to identify issues, suggest how to address these  
3 issues, provide information about the area, and to exchange ideas with agency  
4 representatives. Meetings were held in Butte, Wasilla and Anchorage over the course of the  
5 last 18 months.

6  
7 Concurrent with the public process, resource information was collected and reviewed. The  
8 complicated land status both within and adjacent to the area was researched. Discussions  
9 with DNR and other borough, state and federal agency staff contributed information  
10 regarding resources and impacts within and adjacent to the area. Planning team meetings  
11 provided agency representatives an opportunity to discuss issues and provide input into the  
12 identification of issues and development of alternatives and proposed management actions.

13  
14 During this time, the Southcentral Regional Office within the Division of Mining, Land and  
15 Water hired staff to manage the area and develop regulations that addressed the issues that  
16 were of the greatest concern to the public. The Region also enlisted the help of the  
17 Department of Public Safety to patrol the area on a more frequent basis.

## 18 19 20 **How the Draft Plan Will be Used**

21  
22 This plan has five primary functions:

- 23  
24 • Provide overall guidance to management decisions that will have to be made for the  
25 area. Once adopted by the Commissioner, this plan will be the policy of DNR for the  
26 management of the area. Actions taken by DNR must be consistent with the plan.
- 27 • Recommend facilities to meet current and future needs of the public.
- 28 • Identify compatible and incompatible uses on which to base management guidelines  
29 and recommendations.
- 30 • Provide resource and use information to base future decisions.
- 31 • Provide the public with a meaningful opportunity to determine the future  
32 management of the PUA.

## 33 34 35 **What the Plan Will or Will Not Do**

36  
37 The plan **will**:

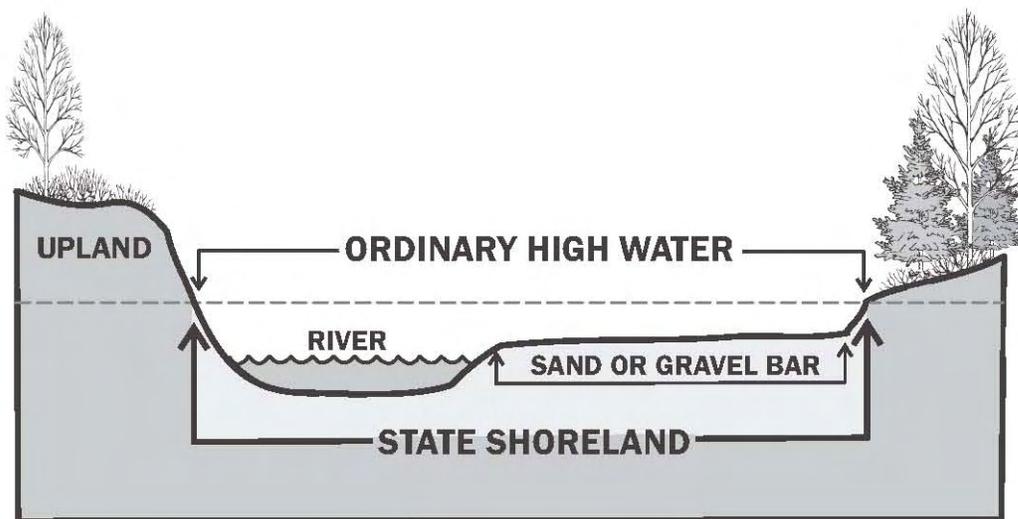
- 38  
39 • Provide for the management of state land as provided in the implementing legislation  
40 (AS 41.23.180-230). State land within the PUA includes both uplands and  
41 shorelands. See Figure 1-1, *State Shorelands*, pp. 1 - 9.

- 1 • Supersede all current management direction now provided in the *Susitna Area Plan*
- 2 and the *Prince William Sound Area Plan* where these area plans include areas within
- 3 the PUA.
- 4 • Reclassify all state lands previously classified in area plans.
- 5 • Address the management of certain lands adjacent to the PUA. These lands are
- 6 within the planning area, but are not within the boundary of the PUA.
- 7 • Address trails management and other natural resource protection measures in the
- 8 PUA.
- 9 • Recommend parcels for acquisition by the state.
- 10 • Recommend lands for inclusion in the PUA.
- 11 • Provide an area to enhance non-motorized recreation in the area around Rippy Trail.
- 12 • Recommend shooting area designations at Maud Road and east of the Pavilion
- 13 Parking area.
- 14 • Provide the basis for development of regulations necessary to implement the plan.

15  
16 The plan **will not**:

- 17
- 18 • Apply to lands owned by private individuals, Native corporations, MSB, MHT, or
- 19 federal lands other than those identified in the plan.
- 20 • Affect the authorities of ADFG to manage fish and game or ADFG harvest
- 21 regulations.
- 22 • Address land topfiled by the state but selected by Eklutna Inc. except for the need for
- 23 easements across these lands.
- 24
- 25

26 **Figure 1-1: State Shorelands**



27

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

2  
3 The intent of the legislation that created the PUA is to perpetuate and enhance general public  
4 recreation and public enjoyment of fish and wildlife and to address the impacts of that use to  
5 fish and wildlife and their habitat within the PUA. All management actions by DNR must be  
6 consistent with Alaska Statutes at AS 41.23.180-230. In the absence of more specific  
7 guidance contained in AS 41.23.180-230, the other provisions of Title 38 (general resource  
8 management) apply. That is, state land is to be managed consistent with AS 41.23.180-230  
9 and Title 38 except where the specific requirements of AS 41.23.180-230 apply. In addition,  
10 other provisions of state and federal laws and borough code may also apply to the area.  
11  
12

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

14  
15 Portions of this planning area have been addressed in previous state, federal and Matanuska-  
16 Susitna Borough plans. State lands within the PUA have been addressed in previous DNR  
17 plans. A recent Bureau of Land Management plan addresses federally owned land within the  
18 PUA. In addition, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough has several plans that address lands  
19 within or adjacent to the PUA.  
20

### 21 **State Plans**

22 Portions of the PUA planning area have been addressed in two previous DNR area plans.  
23 Adopted plans that overlap the PUA planning area include the *Susitna Area Plan* and the  
24 *Prince William Sound Area Plan*. Where the Knik River Public Use Area Management Plan  
25 overlaps with these older area plans, the management plan supersedes these plans and their  
26 classifications, policies, and guidelines.  
27

### 28 **Federal Plans and Documents**

29 Two pertinent federal documents were reviewed prior to the development of the PUA  
30 Management Plan. These federal plans or documents are the *Ring of Fire Plan*, completed in  
31 2006 by the Bureau of Land Management and the *Ecological Review of the Lake George*  
32 *National Natural Landmark* completed for the National Park Service in 1996.  
33

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

35 The MSB has developed a number of plans to address development within the Borough.  
36 Plans that address lands within the PUA include: the *Matanuska-Susitna Borough*  
37 *Comprehensive Plan* (adopted in 1970 and updated in 2005); *Asset Management Plan for*  
38 *Borough-owned Lands in the Butte Area* (2007); and, the *Matanuska-Susitna Borough*  
39 *Coastal Management Plan* (2006). These plans have been reviewed, and the policies within  
40 them have been taken under consideration when developing this plan.  
41

1 **Agreements**

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

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

## 2 **Introduction**

3

4 All management plans are intended to accomplish certain purposes. In the case of this plan,  
5 the objective is to identify a more specific management direction for the PUA, while  
6 implementing the statutory purposes of the legislation described in AS 41.23.180-230. This  
7 more specific management direction is intended to provide guidance to DNR for the  
8 management of this important recreational and ecological area. Management direction is  
9 usually expressed through goals and management guidelines in plan prepared by DNR.

10

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

17

18

## 19 **Definitions**

20

### 21 **Goals**

22

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

25

### 26 **Management Guidelines**

27

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

36

37

1 **Overall Management Direction**

2  
3 DNR will focus management guidelines on maintaining and enhancing access and  
4 recreational opportunities for public and commercial users, protection of resources and  
5 environment, and law enforcement and public safety. More specific management direction is  
6 provided through the management guidelines that follow. These policies and guidelines  
7 affect all of the management units within the PUA. All facilities and management actions  
8 proposed in this and subsequent chapters are dependant on adequate funding and DNR  
9 resources.

10  
11 Nothing in this or subsequent chapters or appendices in this document is intended to limit  
12 access for administration/management activities, enforcement, or for public safety within the  
13 PUA.

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## 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 north 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, pp. 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 Sexton and Envy trails.

1 **Management Guidelines**

- 2
- 3 • Main access trails should be improved and upgraded to support increased use.
  - 4 • New trails within the planning area should be developed as sustainable trails<sup>1</sup>.
  - 5 • New trails and facilities should be sited and designed to avoid or minimize impacts to
  - 6 fish and wildlife and their habitats.
  - 7 • Primary trails accessing the PUA from adjacent MSB lands should be reserved as
  - 8 public easements to ensure future access, in the event that the state does not acquire
  - 9 ownership of these lands.
  - 10 • The Trails Management Process should identify existing primary trails providing
  - 11 access to the PUA and reserve them as public easements. All new trails authorized by
  - 12 DNR will be reserved and designated for specific purposes.
  - 13 • The state will work with MSB to acquire a portion of the Jim Creek parcel which
  - 14 includes the Pavilion Parking area and the Sexton and Envy trails.

15

16 **Goal**

- 17
- 18 • Ensure that the number and location of 17(b) easements within areas to be conveyed
- 19 to a Native corporation provides adequate access to adjacent state land.
- 20

21 **Management Guideline**

- 22
- 23 • Prior to the conveyance of federal lands, DNR’s Public Access Assertion and Defense
- 24 Unit will be involved in the process to reserve 17(b) easements. While all currently
- 25 identified 17(b) routes are important for access to adjacent public land, several are
- 26 critical to maintaining access for private landowners and miners and DNR will
- 27 attempt to assert these particularly.
- 28

29 **Goal**

- 30
- 31 • Maintain and enhance access to the PUA on the south side of the Knik River.
- 32

33 **Management Guideline**

- 34
- 35 • DNR will recommend that BLM retain PLO 3324 in federal ownership.
- 36 • DNR may identify private parcels on the south side of the Knik River for acquisition
- 37 for the purpose of enhancing access to the PUA. These lands will only be acquired
- 38 from willing parties.
- 39

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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 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 Public Use Area, subject to the requirements of the management plan. See Appendix J for specific information on how DNR will implement a commercial use permit system.
- 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.
- See Appendix J for specific details on see how DNR will implement this Goal.

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## **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, Office of Habitat Management and Permitting, US Army Corps of Engineers, and US 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 will be necessary to coordinate with a variety of local, state, and federal agencies throughout the planning period. 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 work 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.

1 **Goal**

2

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

4

5 **Management Guidelines**

6

- 7 • Work with appropriate federal, state, or local agencies to identify and address  
8 violations of environmental laws, regulations, or ordinances.

- 9 • Consult with these agencies on implementation and enforcement programs that have  
10 been determined, through interagency review, to be necessary.

- 11 • Contact appropriate federal, state, and local agencies regarding potential violations of  
12 soil, water, and air quality.

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## **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.

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## **Fees**

### **Background**

Consistent with the Letter of Intent provided with AS 41.23.180-230<sup>2</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>2</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.

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## **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. 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 or cygnets. Once abandoned, swans and loons will not re-nest for the remainder of that year.

AS 41.23.180-230, 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 ADFG to identify areas that require special management attention. After the review of available resource data and discussions with ADFG, 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.

**Goal**

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

**Management Guidelines**

- 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 watermark. See Figure 1-1, pp. 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.
- 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 ADFG, DNR should re-evaluate the habitat in the PUA to determine if areas could be identified as sensitive habitat.
- DNR should consult with ADFG to determine if uses are impacting fish, wildlife and their habitats.

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## **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 KRPUA. 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 KRPUA 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 them 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 KRPUA. 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 KRPUA. 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.

1 **Management Guideline**

- 2
- 3 • Permits for commercial or personal use firewood harvest<sup>3</sup>, may be authorized in the
  - 4 PUA after a collection area is identified by DOF and DMLW, but shall not be located
  - 5 in the Rippy Non-motorized Area if a feasible alternative location exists.
  - 6 • Develop regulations that prevent the over-harvest of non-timber products for
  - 7 commercial purposes; limit where fires may be built; limit the size of fires; and
  - 8 regulate the type of material that may be burned.\*
  - 9 • DOF may conduct timber removal for such administrative purposes as timber salvage,
  - 10 habitat manipulation, fire fuel reduction, or other purposes as determined appropriate
  - 11 by DNR. Such operations may occur in throughout the PUA, including the proposed
  - 12 Rippy Non-motorized Area.
  - 13

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<sup>3</sup> Persons may still harvest dead and down trees without prior written authorization from DNR for personal use warming and/or cooking fires.

\* This guideline is currently included in phase one proposed regulations (11 AAC 96.15).

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## **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 gets 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 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 regulations to address issues related to public use, health, and safety. See Appendix C for regulations proposed by DNR.\*
- Trespass structures will be removed.\*
- Develop sanitary and waste disposal facilities in areas of concentrated use such as by parking and camping areas.
- Prohibit burning of materials that will contribute to waste or litter in the PUA.\*
- 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**

- DNR should restrict shooting in heavily used areas and areas with nearby residences.\*
- Shooting areas with specified hours 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.
- DNR will explore the possibility of developing areas for recreational shooting on state land east of the Pavilion Parking area and at the existing user created shooting area at Maud Road. The recommended shooting areas are depicted on Map 2-1, pp. 2 - 17. Time of use restrictions for shooting area will be designated by DNR.
- DNR should seasonally restrict speed of motorized boats on a segment of McRoberts Creek from the Jim Lake portage to the confluence of Jim and McRoberts creeks to address safety concerns related to use of motorized watercraft at high speeds on a segment of the creek that is narrow and has limited sight distances.
- 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 measures that will preclude large unregulated events that often result in lawless activities, damage to the PUA and threats to public safety.\*

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\* This guideline is currently included in phase one proposed regulations (11 AAC 96.15).

- 1 • Discharge of explosives and/or fireworks will be prohibited unless authorized by
- 2 DNR.\*
- 3 • Develop and employ educational strategies to change behavior.
- 4

5 **Goal**

- 6
- 7 • Increase DNR and law enforcement presence in the PUA and draft regulations that
- 8 are necessary to implement the plan and manage state resources.
- 9

10 **Management Guidelines**

- 11
- 12 • Initiate and continue DNR field presence in the PUA.
- 13 • Continue to work with the Department of Public Safety to enforce state statutes and
- 14 regulations.
- 15 • Continue to work closely with users of the PUA to obtain information on violations of
- 16 local, state, and federal laws and regulations.
- 17

18 **Goal**

- 19
- 20 • Increase public safety by reducing potential for wildfires.
- 21

22 **Management Guideline**

- 23
- 24 • To prevent wildfires develop regulations that limit where fires may be built, how big
- 25 they may be and what types of materials may be put in them.\*
- 26 • Initiate and continue DNR field presence in the PUA.
- 27

# Knik River Public Use Area

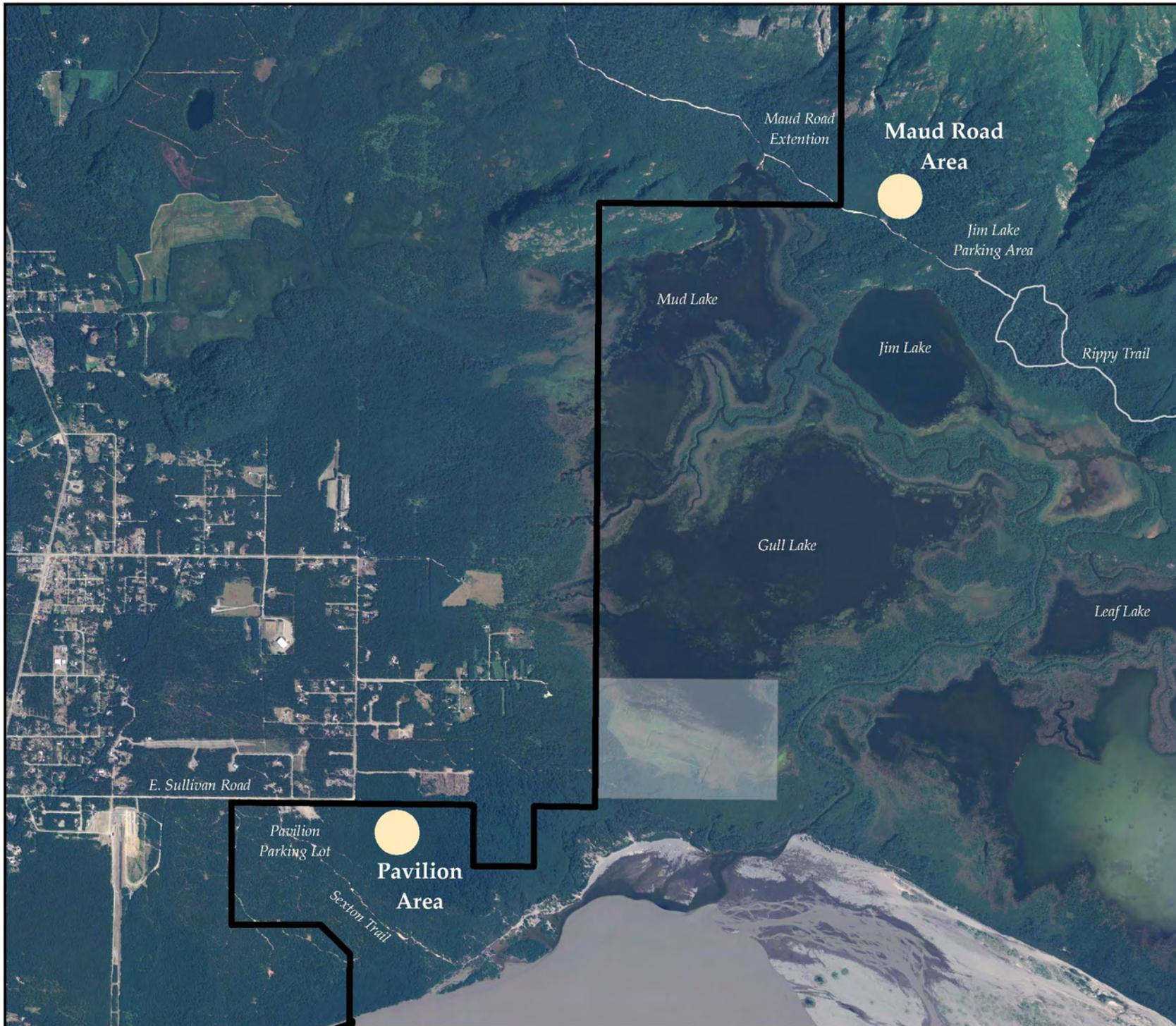
(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

## Recommended Designated Shooting Areas

### Map 2-1

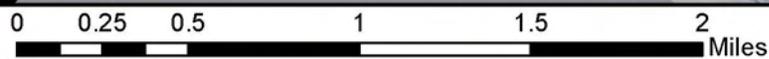
 KRPUA Planning Boundary

 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



## 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) 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.

- 1       • Recreation Facilities Adjacent to Heritage Resources. Recreation facilities that might  
2       make heritage sites more susceptible to damage and disturbance because of increased  
3       public use should not be placed adjacent to the heritage sites without mitigating  
4       measures. Prior to new construction or modification of existing routes, or facilities,  
5       the OHA should be contacted to determine if historical, archeological, or pre-historic  
6       site(s) are reported. This data set is continually being updated and, should be  
7       consulted on all proposed projects.
- 8       • Reporting of Heritage Sites. Staff will report the presence of new heritage sites to  
9       OHA. OHA will add this information to the Alaska Heritage Resources Survey  
10      (AHRS) database. The AHRS database is an inventory of all reported historic and  
11      prehistoric sites within the State of Alaska.  
12

## 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>4</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, or wetlands. 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, 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>4</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.

- 1 • Following cessation of use, mater sites shall be rehabilitated according to  
2 AS 27.19.020 and 11 AAC 97.250.
- 3 • Prior to granting authorizations for materials sales, DNR should coordinate with MSB  
4 to determine applicable supplemental zoning requirements.  
5

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## 2 **Mitigation**

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4

### 5 **Background**

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

14

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

19

### 20 **Goal**

21

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

23

### 24 **Management Guidelines**

25

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

29

- 30 1. Avoid anticipated, significant adverse effects on fish and wildlife, or their habitats  
31 through siting, timing, or other management options.
- 32 2. When significant adverse effects cannot be avoided by design, siting, timing, or other  
33 management options, the adverse effect of the use or development will be minimized.
- 34 3. If significant loss of fish or wildlife habitat occurs, the loss will be rectified, to the  
35 extent feasible and prudent, by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected area  
36 to a useful state.
- 37 4. DNR will consider requiring replacement with other areas with like resource values  
38 or enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat when steps 1 through 3 cannot avoid  
39 substantial and irreversible loss of habitat. ADFG will clearly identify the species  
40 affected, the need for replacement or enhancement, and the suggested method for  
41 addressing the impact. Replacement with or enhancement of similar habitats of the  
42 affected species in the same region is preferable. DNR will consider only those  
43 replacement and enhancement techniques that have either been proven to be, or are  
44 likely to be, effective and that will result in a benefit to the species impacted by the

1           development. Replacement or enhancement will only be required by DNR if it is  
2           determined to be in the best interest of the state either through the Best Interest  
3           Finding process AS 38.05.035(e) or permit review process. Replacement may  
4           include structural solutions, such as creating spawning or rearing ponds for salmon,  
5           creating wetlands for waterfowl; or non-structural measures, such as research or  
6           management of the species affected, legislative or administrative allocation of lands  
7           to a long-term level of habitat protection that is sufficiently greater than that which  
8           they would otherwise receive, or fire management to increase habitat productivity.  
9

## 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. Based on a 1994 Settlement Agreement between the Trust and the State, it is to be returned to the State. 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 pp 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 existing SUA designation for state owned land in section 31, T17N, R3E (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>5</sup>.

---

<sup>5</sup> Currently there are no additional private parcels identified for acquisition. DNR will only purchase private land from willing sellers.

- 1       • The state should acquire the private parcel on the northeast side of the Old Glenn
- 2       Highway Bridge.
- 3       • If DNR does not acquire the private parcel, DNR should explore the possibility of
- 4       acquiring legal access through this parcel.
- 5

## 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. There are four public use sites identified in this plan: Lower Knik Flats, Jim Lake, Jim Creek, and Knik Glacier. When the adjacent uplands are in borough or private ownership, the public use site includes only the state shorelands below ordinary high water. See Map 2-2, pp. 2 - 29, in Chapter 2 that shows these sites.

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.

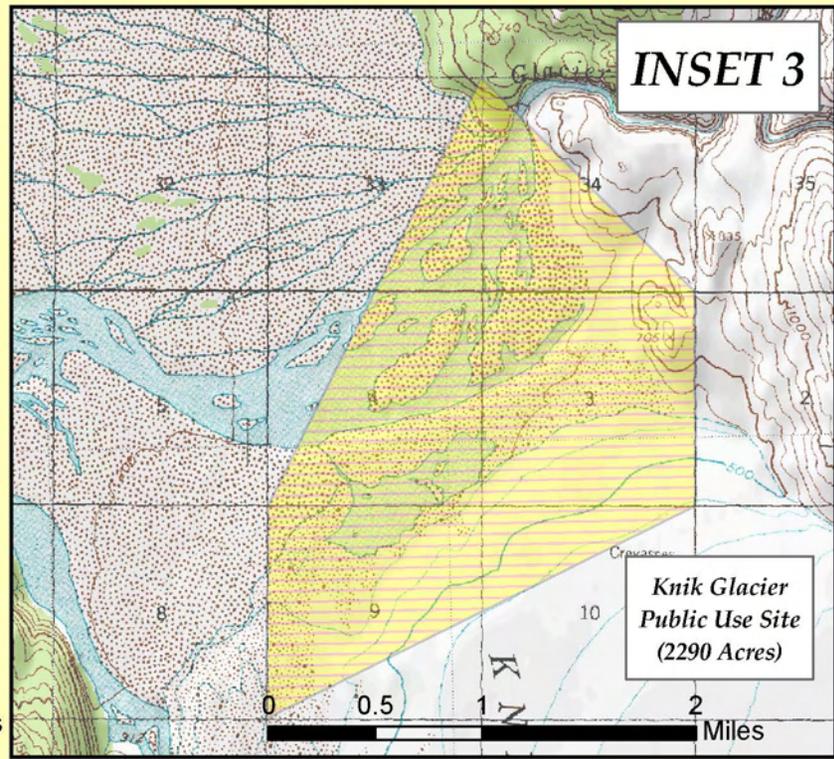
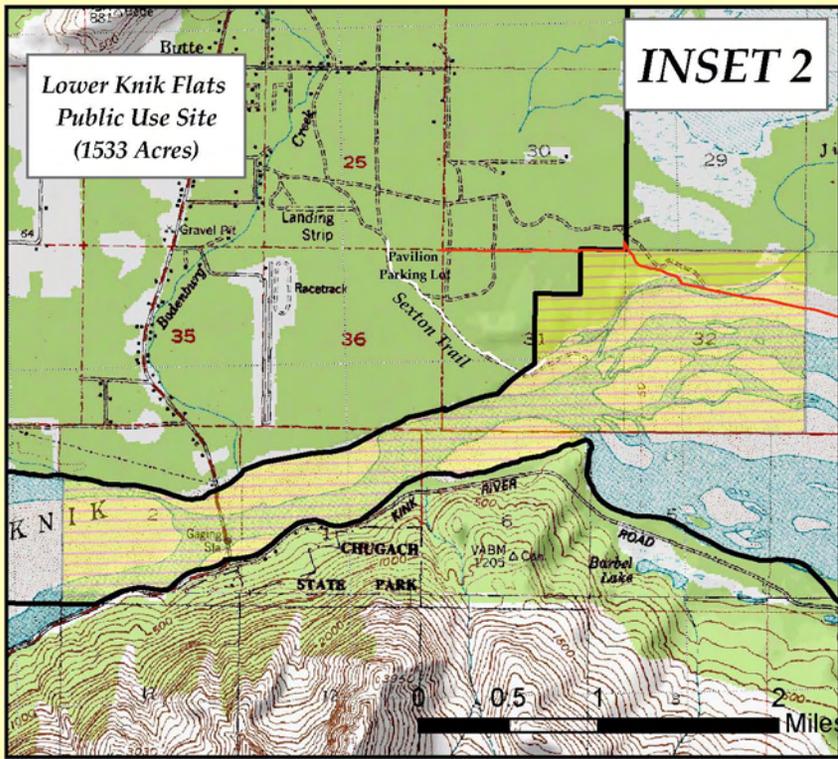
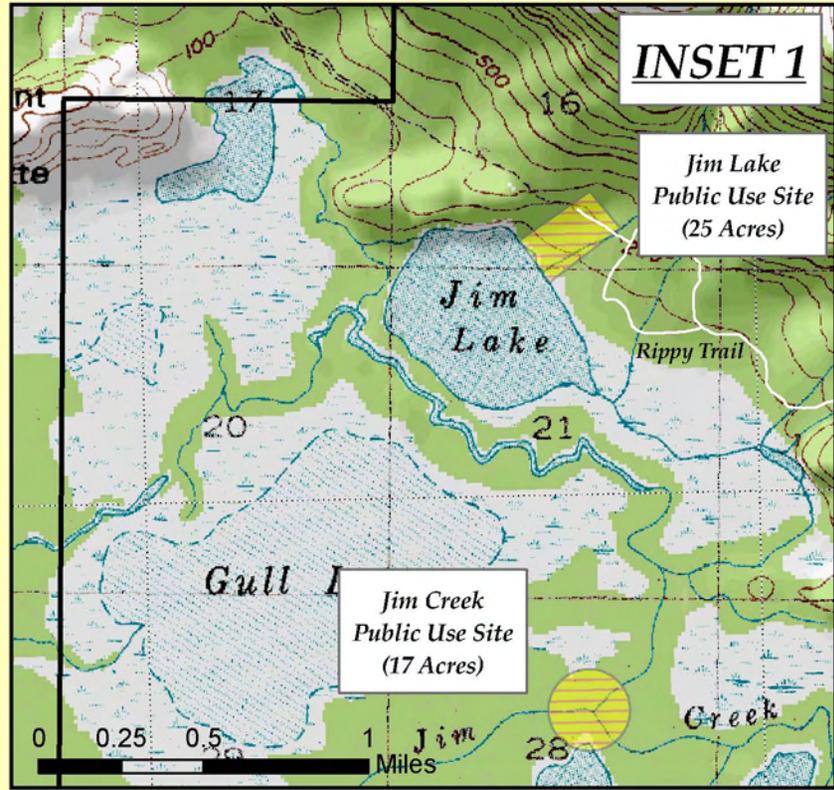
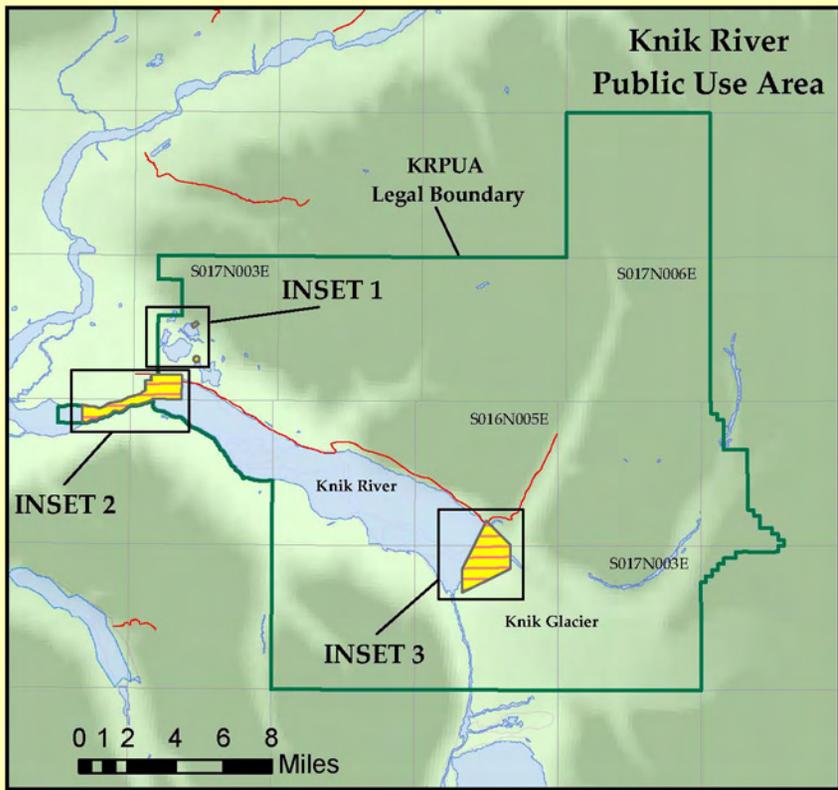
### Goal

- 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: Lower Flats, Jim/McRoberts Confluence, Jim Lake, and Knik Glacier. 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.

- 1       • Improvements such as public facilities, docks, boat ramps, and public airstrips can be  
2       authorized.
- 3       • Camping will be restricted to identified sites if a campground is constructed or if  
4       designated campsites are identified.
- 5       • DNR will restrict recreational discharge of weapons in public use sites to protect  
6       public safety.  
7



# Knik River Public Use Area

(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

## Public Use Sites

### Map 2-2

-  KRPUA Legal Boundary
-  Public Use Sites
-  RS 2477



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, pp. 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. 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 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.

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 automobiles, reckless shooting, and underage drinking.

### Goal

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

## 1 Management Guidelines

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

## 31 Goal

- 32
- 33
- 34 • Provide for the protection and use of wetlands.
- 35

## 36 Management Guidelines

- 37
- 38 • Redundant trails or trails determined by DNR to have significant negative impacts on
- 39 wetland functions should be closed to use. The closure of trails will be based upon
- 40 the results of the TMP.

---

<sup>6</sup> The Trails Management Process is described in detail in Appendix D.

- 1       • New trails in wetlands should be avoided, but if no reasonable alternative location  
2       exists, they should be developed in a manner that minimizes impacts to the wetlands  
3       excluding the area depicted on Map 2-3, pp. 2 - 35. In all cases such trails should be  
4       developed as sustainable trails.
- 5       • Recreational public facilities and projects should avoid wetlands and areas of  
6       sensitive fish and wildlife habitat.
- 7

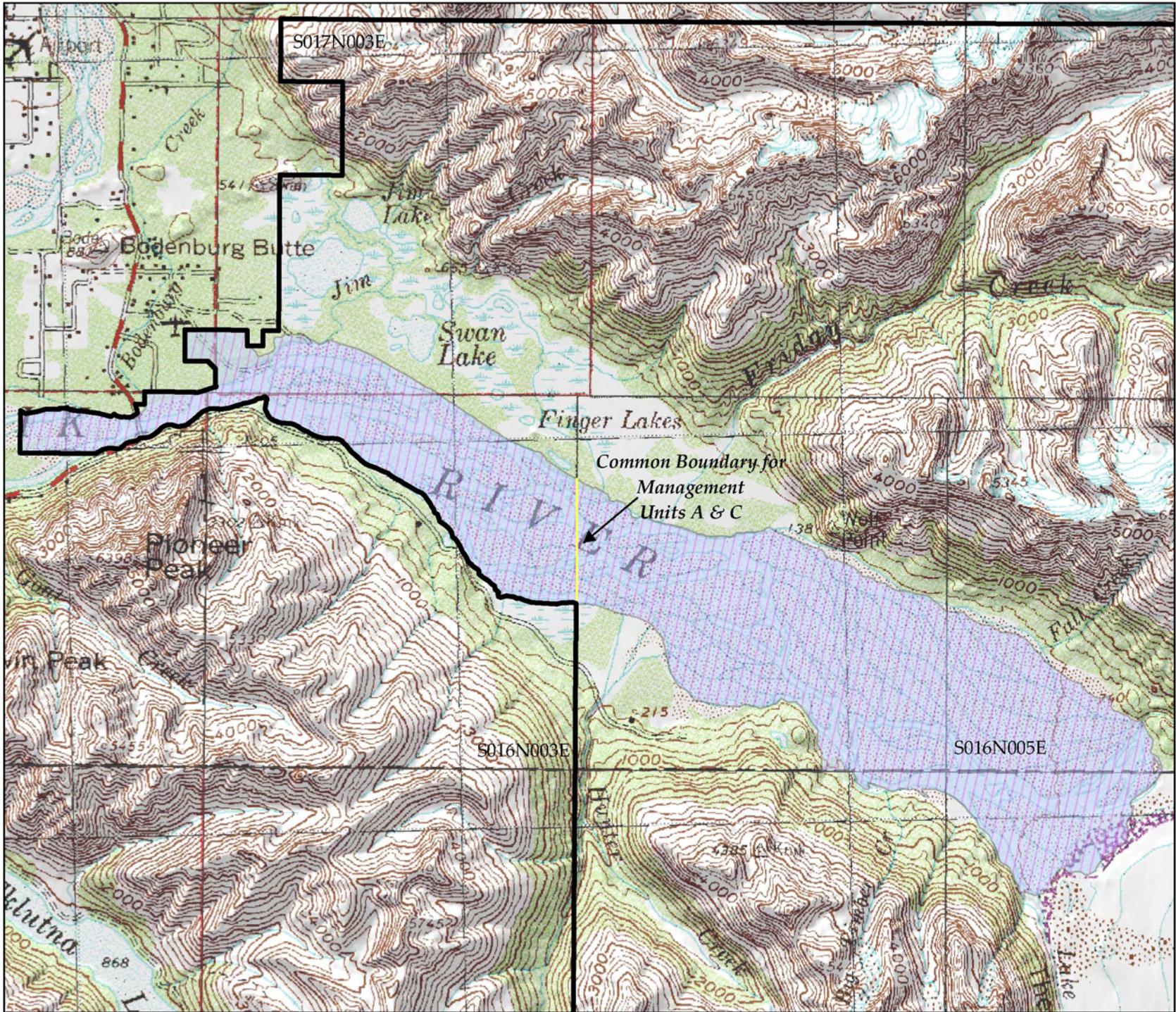
# Knik River Public Use Area

(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

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

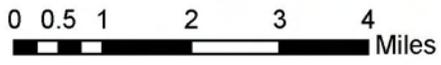
### Map 2-3

-  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

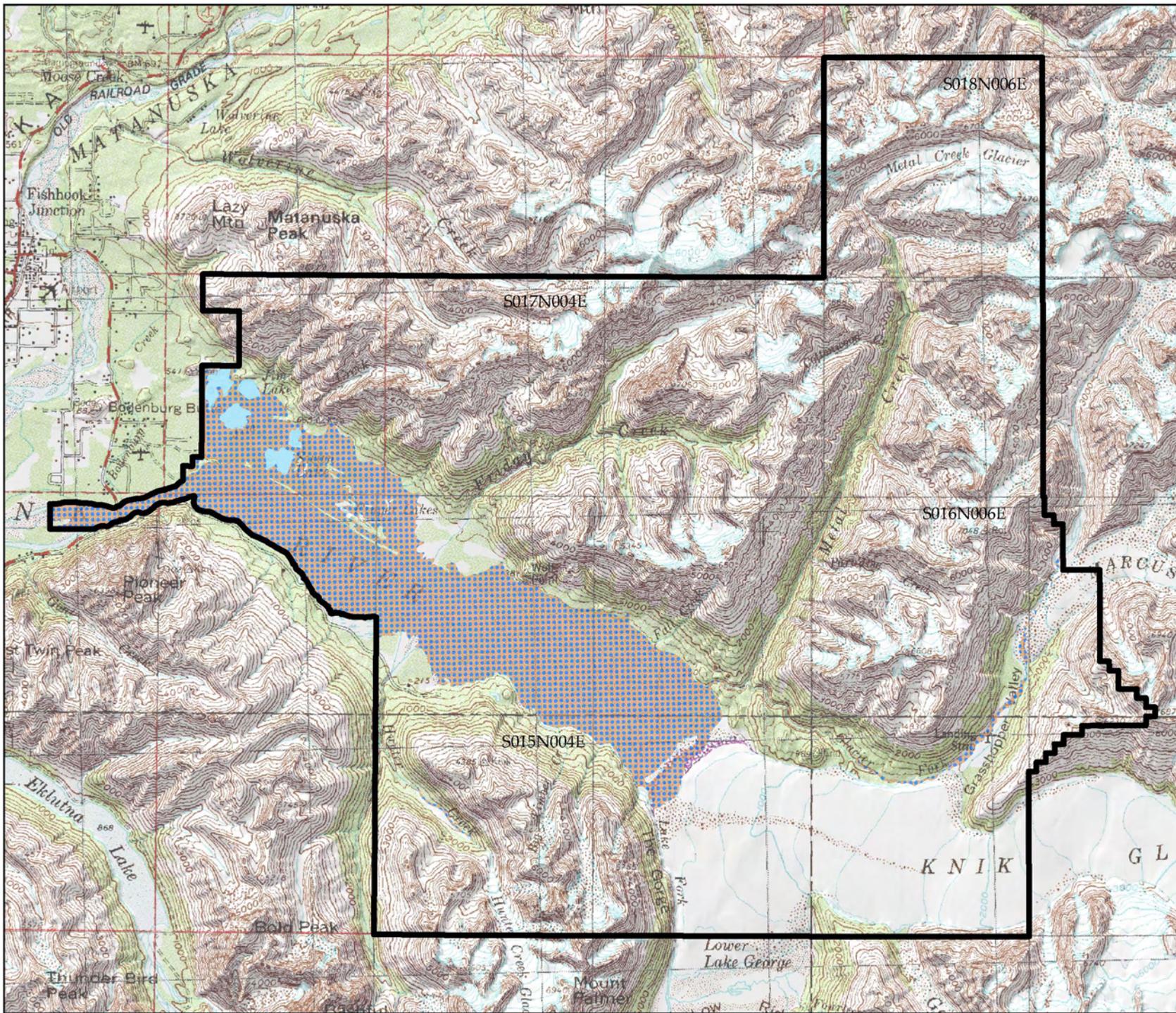


# Knik River Public Use Area

(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

1

## 2 **Subsurface Resources**

3

4

### 5 **Background**

6

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

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

17 The Cook Inlet Areawide Oil and Gas Lease Sale boundary does not include the public use  
18 area. A new best interest finding for the Cook Inlet area is being written and it is expected to  
19 be completed mid-2008. Although not anticipated, the Cook Inlet Areawide Oil and Gas  
20 Lease Sale boundary could conceivably be expanded to include state-owned land within the  
21 public use area for leasing under AS 38.05.180. State land, with few exceptions, is subject to  
22 oil and gas exploration and development, either through areawide leasing under  
23 AS 38.05.180 or by exploration licensing under AS 38.05.131. It should be noted that  
24 mineral closing orders under AS 38.05.185 do not apply to oil and gas exploration and  
25 leasing, nor do they preclude reasonable surface access to these resources. However, rights  
26 reserved under AS 38.05.125 may not be exercised until provision is made for payment for  
27 all damages sustained by the land owner (AS 38.05.130). In addition, geophysical  
28 exploration permits issued under 11 AAC 96 will conform to the maximum extent possible  
29 with the management guidelines in the plan, but are not prohibited.

30

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

34

### 35 **Coal Resources**

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

39

1 **Locatable Minerals**

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

8

9 **Goal**

10

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

13

14 **Management Guidelines**

15

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

19

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

34

## 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 ADFG to assess 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

- 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 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.

- 1 • DNR may consider Trail Management Agreements with organizations or individuals  
2 for the maintenance of trails or segments of trails.
- 3 • When sighting a new trail or re-routing an existing trail adjacent to an anadromous  
4 waterbody DNR will consider the impact associated with the use of that trail on the  
5 waterbody.
- 6 • All trails (new and up-graded, expanded or re-routed) or facilities within the planning  
7 area should be sited and designed to avoid impacts to fish and wildlife and their  
8 habitats. If impacts to these habitats cannot be avoided, they should be minimized.
- 9 • All trails and developed facilities should be sited and developed to minimize impacts  
10 to anadromous waterbodies. Stream crossings should be developed generally  
11 perpendicular to the stream flow.
- 12 • Within 100 feet of an anadromous waterbody, excluding the Knik River and  
13 shorelands of the Knik River, trails should not be developed parallel to the ordinary  
14 high watermark. See Figure 1-1, pp. 1 - 9 for a depiction of state shorelands.
- 15 • New trails proposed within or adjacent to waterfowl nesting habitat, fish spawning  
16 and rearing areas, moose calving concentration areas, or swan or loon nesting areas  
17 should be sited and developed to avoid impacts to these areas. If these identified  
18 sensitive areas cannot be avoided, the impacts to these areas should be minimized.  
19

## 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 form non-motorized recreation. 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 mitigating 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 ADFG 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.

1 **CHAPTER 3: MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES,**  
2 **RECOMMENDATIONS, AND PUBLIC USE SITES FOR EACH**  
3 **MANAGEMENT UNIT**

4  
5 Introduction..... 1  
6 Map 3-1: Knik River Management Plan Units ..... 3  
7 Unit A – Lower Knik Flats ..... 5  
8 Map 3-2: Proposed Waterbody Restrictions ..... 11  
9 Unit B – Lakes and Wetlands ..... 13  
10 Map 3-3: Rippy Non-motorized Area..... 19  
11 Unit C – Upper Knik Flats ..... 23  
12 Unit D – Upper Jim Alpine ..... 27  
13 Unit E – Upper Friday Alpine..... 31  
14 Unit F – Grasshopper Valley ..... 35  
15 Unit G – Glacier ..... 39  
16 Unit H – Metal Creek..... 41

17  
18

# 1 **Chapter 3: Management Guidelines,** 2 **Recommendations, and Public Use Sites for each** 3 **Management Unit**

## 4 **Introduction**

5

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

10

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

16

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

21

### 22 **Unit Description**

23

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

26

### 27 **Management Intent**

28

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

31

### 32 **Management Guidelines**

33

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

39

1        **Management Recommendations**

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

5  
6        **Facilities Recommendations**

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

12  
13       **Public Use Sites**

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

18

# Knik River Public Use Area

(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

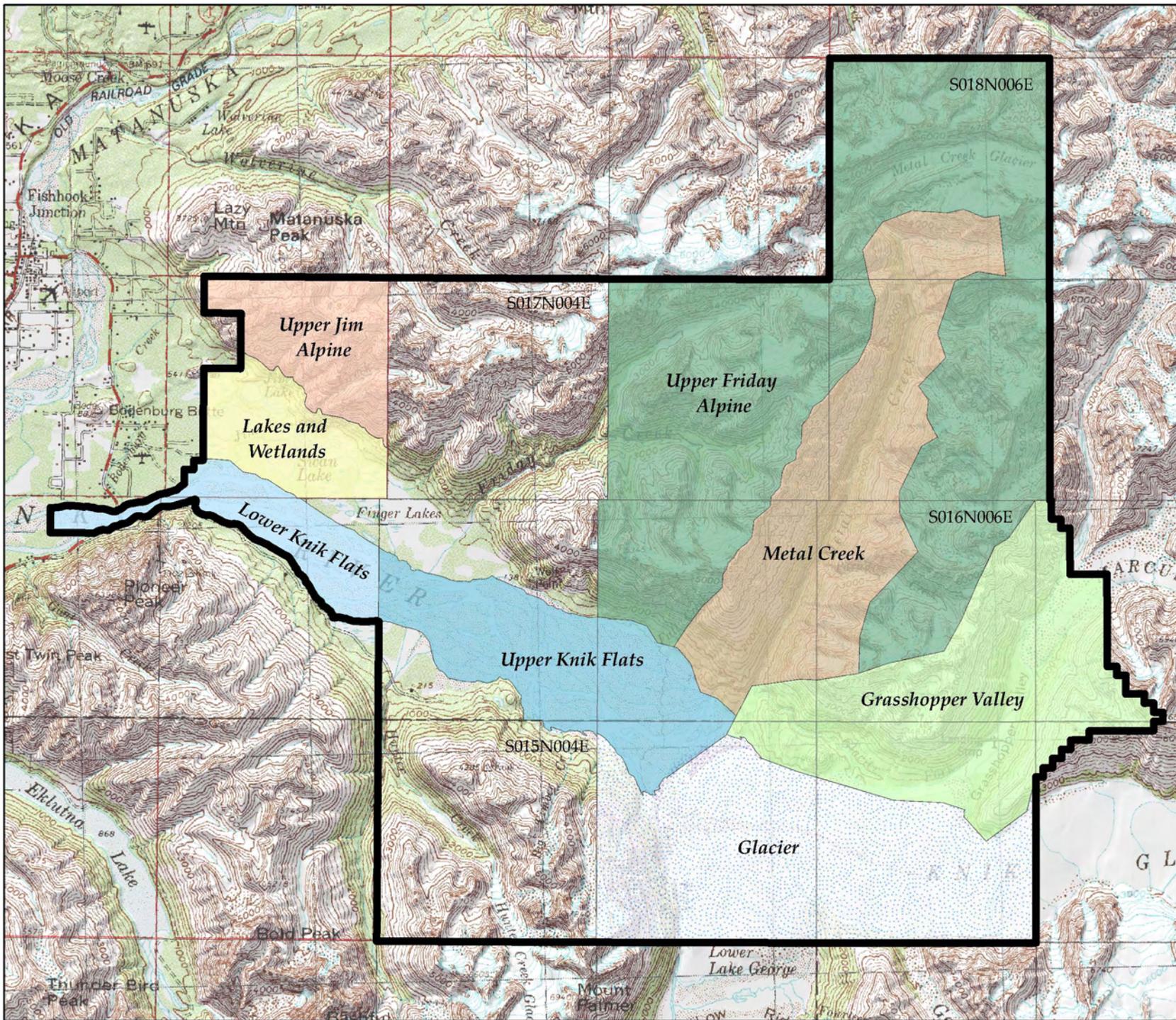
## Management Units

### Map 3-1

 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



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



## 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, R3E. It is bounded by the Ordinary High Water Mark of the Knik River on the south, and the north side of the Knik Glacier Trail (RST 17) is the northern boundary. 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* pp 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 pp. 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 in this unit; 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 the difficult access to the headwaters. Canoes and rafts routinely put in at access points along the Knik River Road and float down to takeouts at the New and Old Glenn bridges. Non-motorized watercraft includes canoes, kayaks and rafts.

1 Motorized uses include highway and OHV operation as a means of access for fishing,  
2 hunting and for recreation. Motorized boat use is common on the Knik River. OHV use  
3 occurs primarily on the numerous trails near the Pavilion Parking, the unvegetated gravel  
4 bars of the Knik River, and the Knik Glacier Trail (RST 17). During winter months  
5 frozen ground conditions allow for increased motorized recreational opportunities and  
6 access. Motorized boating primarily occurs on the Knik River and Jim Creek during ice-  
7 free periods. Typical vessels include motorboats, jetboats and airboats. Limited airboat  
8 use occurs throughout the year. Motorized boating use increases during the fishing and  
9 hunting seasons.

### 10 11 **Fisheries Habitat**

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

### 19 20 **Wildlife Habitat**

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

26  
27 Migratory waterfowl utilize the water of the Knik River and adjacent shorelands as a  
28 stopover during their spring and fall migrations. Habitat for nesting and brooding is  
29 limited. Many types of both game and non-game species of waterfowl can be found. See  
30 Appendix B, Map B-2 for waterfowl habitat and nesting habitat.

31  
32 Large and small game species utilize available habitat. Moose utilize habitat primarily  
33 for over-wintering, however, use outside of winter also occurs. Bear habitat encompasses  
34 the entire unit. Small game species such as rabbit and spruce grouse can be found in the  
35 vegetated areas. See Appendix B, Map B-3, Moose Habitat.

### 36 37 **Commercial Use**

38 This unit receives moderate amounts of commercial use, primarily as access to other units  
39 in the Public Use Area. Currently, no land use authorizations for temporary or permanent  
40 commercial facilities have been issued by DNR in this unit. Commercial uses include  
41 OHV, jet-boat, flightseeing, and air-boat tours. Hunting and fishing guides may operate  
42 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. Current staffing shortages in Department of Public Safety and 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

1 recreation and access to adjacent units for hunting and fishing. The high level of use is  
2 causing impacts to the existing trails in addition to displacing some users from those  
3 same trails. Some users suggested they are displaced from the area because of conflict  
4 with other user groups on trails. Others suggested that trail rutting and debris on the trails  
5 made them unusable for some methods of non-motorized travel.  
6

7 There are other issues concerning this unit that apply to the entire public use area. These  
8 areawide issues are summarized in Chapter 2 rather than in every unit. Many areawide  
9 issues are addressed by draft regulations recently released for public review and comment  
10 and now are in the process of being finalized.  
11

### 12 **Management Intent**

13 The management intent for the Lower Knik Flats Unit is to manage for high levels of public  
14 use, particularly at proposed parking and camping areas and at the public use site.  
15 Recreational opportunities will be enhanced by applying management guidelines directed  
16 specifically to this unit and to the entire public use area. The unit will be managed to provide  
17 the full spectrum of public uses and increased use in the future, while minimizing impacts of  
18 use on fish and wildlife habitat and protecting public safety. Facilities are proposed to be  
19 constructed at key locations that will enhance the public's enjoyment of the area, protect  
20 public safety and minimize impacts on fish and wildlife habitat. DNR will address trail use  
21 impacts to identified sensitive fish and wildlife habitats through the TMP described in  
22 Appendix D.  
23

24 It is intended that OHV and highway vehicle uses continue on the forested uplands adjacent  
25 to the Pavilion Parking area and on the unvegetated shorelands of the Knik River. See Map  
26 2-3, pp. 2 – 35 for a depiction of this area. Increasing levels of such use are also considered  
27 appropriate. DNR has concluded that the continuation of these uses is appropriate in these  
28 areas and that rutting and ground disturbing impact from these uses have minimal and an  
29 acceptable level of impact on the identified area. The TMP will address potential impacts  
30 associated with use of trails in all other areas of the unit. Except for impacts related to  
31 rutting and ground disturbance, uses in the area described above remain subject to all local,  
32 state, and federal authorities for other impacts associated with their use.  
33

34 DNR is committed to improve access from Sullivan Avenue to the lower flats. DNR will  
35 improve access into the PUA from Sullivan Ave. through road/trail upgrades, and/or new  
36 road construction. These access improvements will be a top priority of DNR because they  
37 will aid our enforcement strategy. These improvements will be reserved through easements,  
38 and they will provide needed access to law enforcement personnel and DNR staff.  
39

### 40 **Management Guidelines**

- 41 • Recreational discharge of firearms will be prohibited per 11 AAC 96.015. Legal  
42 hunting is not affected by this regulation.
- 43 • The portions of the Sexton (ADL# 230254) and Envy (ADL# 230256) trails on state  
44 land will be surveyed and reserved as a public easement to DNR as multiple use  
45 trails.

- 1 • Motorized use on the waters of Manmade Lake will be prohibited during ice-free  
2 periods. Additionally, motorized use of the land within 100 feet of the shoreline of  
3 Manmade Lake will be seasonally restricted to no more than 10 miles per hour. See  
4 Proposed Waterbody Restrictions, Map 3-2, pp. 3 - 11.
- 5 • Develop a non-motorized trail from the area of the Pavilion Parking lot to the Knik  
6 River flats. DNR will explore available funding sources and will, in cooperation with  
7 local groups, work to secure this funding to identify a route and build this new trail  
8 for non-motorized users. The new trail will be reserved as a non-motorized easement  
9 to DNR.

### 10 11 **Management Recommendations**<sup>1</sup>

- 12 • The portion of the Knik Glacier Trail (RST 17) between the Pavilion Parking area and  
13 the Mouth of Jim Creek may be developed as a maintained road. If this occurs the  
14 upgraded portion of the road will be reserved as a public road easement. In addition,  
15 a parking area and sanitary facilities may be developed in the area of the mouth of  
16 Jim Creek.
- 17 • A maintained road may be developed from adjacent state land near the Pavilion  
18 Parking Area to the Knik River flats. The purpose of this road would be to provide  
19 access for public safety, enforcement and maintenance. This new road would not be  
20 open to the public for use.
- 21 • DNR should work with the Office of Habitat Management and Permitting and ADFG  
22 to identify stream crossing locations that will minimize impacts to resources  
23 including fish and wildlife and to the recreating public.

### 24 25 **Facilities Recommendations**<sup>2</sup>

- 26 • A camping facility may be developed near the proposed Jim Creek parking facility.  
27 This camping area would provide primitive camping sites, and should be located  
28 away from the confluence of Jim Creek and the Knik River.
- 29 • Sanitation facilities may be constructed in the area of the parking and/or camping  
30 facilities at Jim Creek. These facilities should consist of toilets, picnic tables, fire  
31 grates, and bear-resistant trash receptacle(s).
- 32 • Sanitation facilities should be constructed at Manmade Lake. Development of these  
33 facilities is dependant upon adequate staffing and funding for site planning and  
34 development.
- 35 • Time and use restrictions for facilities will be developed at the time they are  
36 constructed.

---

<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.

- 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**

A public use sites is designated for the western portion of the flats, and is depicted on Map 2-2 pp. 2 - 27. Several areas near the Old Glenn Bridge and mouth of Jim Creek are heavily used for camping and fishing, particularly during the fall. Another area near Manmade Lake is a popular swimming location for families and receives high use levels during the summer season. The remainder of this area receives increased use related to recreation and fishing throughout the summer and fall. See Public Use Sites in Chapter 2 for management guidelines.

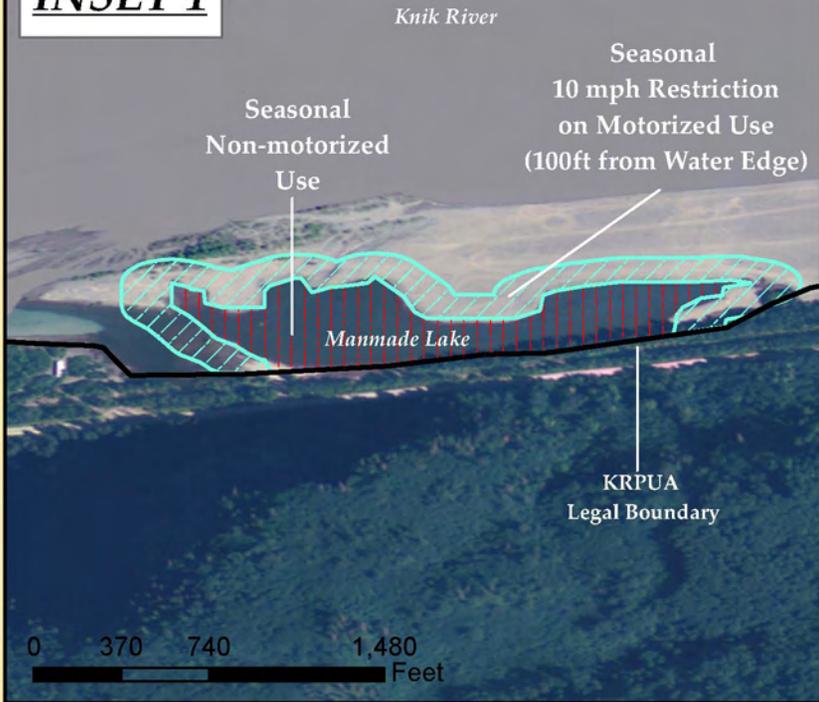
**Land Use Designation**

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

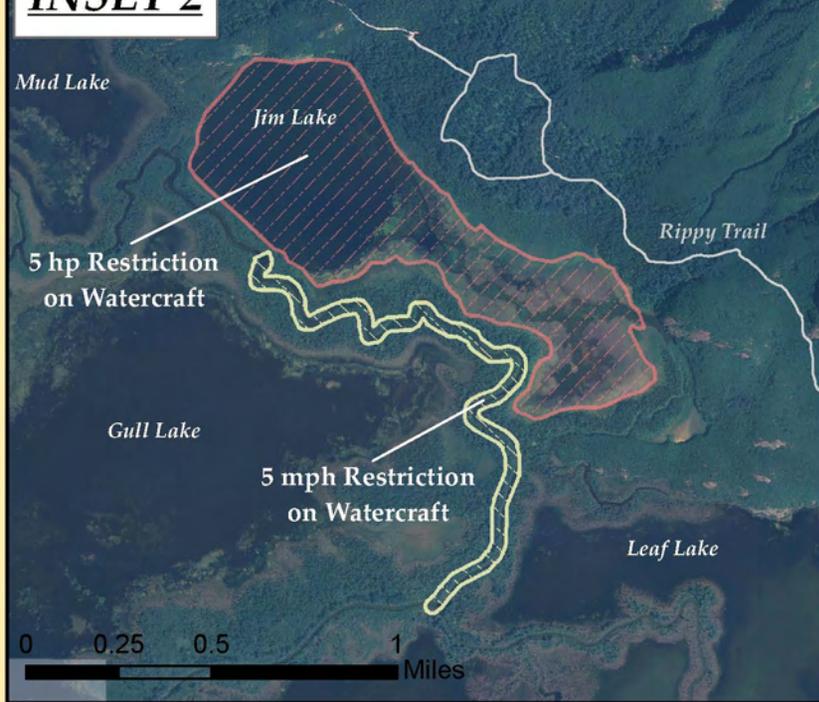
**Allowed/Prohibited Uses**

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

# INSET 1



# INSET 2



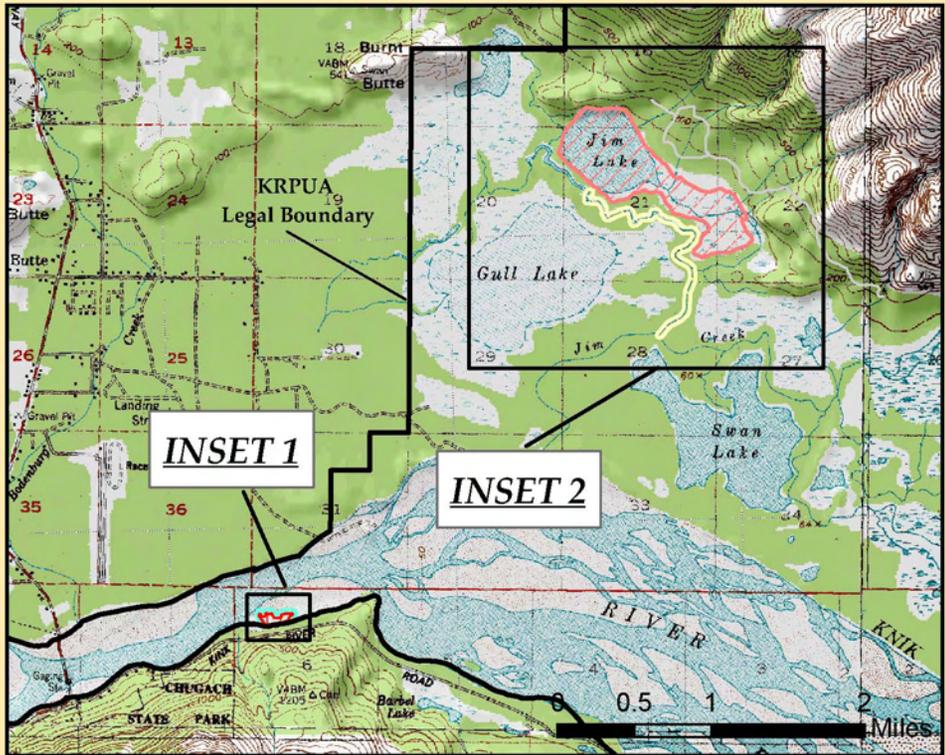
# Knik River Public Use Area

(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

## Proposed Waterbody Restrictions

### Map 3-2

- KRPUA Legal Boundary
- 5 hp Watercraft Restriction
- 5 mph 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 north side of the 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* pp 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 pp. 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.

1 Motorized uses occur throughout this unit primarily to access the area for hunting and  
2 fishing as well as other forms of recreation. Uses include OHV operation and boating.  
3 OHV use occurs primarily on the Maud Road Extension and the Rippy Trail. Some OHV  
4 use also occurs in wetland areas adjacent to the Rippy Trail near Jim Lake; on wetlands  
5 on the south side of Swan Lake; and, on wetlands in the eastern portion of the unit near  
6 Friday Creek. During winter months frozen ground conditions allow for increased  
7 motorized recreational opportunities and access.  
8

9 Motorized boating occurs on many of the waterbodies. Motorized use from the primitive  
10 launches at Jim and Mud lakes is typically by small watercraft with low horsepower.  
11 During the fall hunting and fishing seasons, larger watercraft are used on the lakes and  
12 streams, and wetlands. The launches at Jim and Mud lakes provide access to other  
13 waterbodies within the KRPUA. Motorized boating use increases during fishing and  
14 hunting seasons.  
15

#### 16 **Fisheries habitat**

17 Primary waterbodies in this unit include Jim, Mud, Gull, Swan and Leaf lakes; and Jim  
18 and McRoberts creeks. Waterbodies provide habitat for resident and anadromous fish  
19 species. Because of the diverse waterbodies and extensive wetlands this area is very  
20 productive fish spawning and rearing habitat. Coho salmon are present and/or spawning  
21 in all of the waterbodies in this unit. Sockeye salmon are present in Jim and McRoberts  
22 creeks and Jim Lake. See Appendix B, Map B-1 for a depiction of those streams and  
23 waterbodies included in ADFG's catalogue of waters important for the spawning, rearing,  
24 or migration of anadromous fish.  
25

#### 26 **Wildlife habitat**

27 Habitat consists of expansive areas of lakes, wetlands and streams and forested uplands.  
28 The north edge of the unit is delineated by an abrupt transition zone between boreal forest  
29 and sub-alpine environments. The extensive wetland areas are interspersed with forested  
30 uplands. These uplands are remnant dunes formed after the Knik Glacier retreated.  
31 Because of the diversity of vegetation types and extensive wetlands, this unit is very  
32 productive wildlife habitat.  
33

34 Waterfowl utilize the expansive lakes, creeks, and wetlands for resting and staging during  
35 their spring and fall migrations. Trumpeter swans frequent the open waters of Mud and  
36 Jim lakes in early spring prior to migrating to nesting areas elsewhere in Alaska. In the  
37 fall, large numbers of trumpeter swans return to the lakes and wetlands to rest prior to  
38 migrating to over-wintering habitat in Canada and the western United States. Many  
39 species of waterfowl utilize the habitat for nesting and brooding during spring and  
40 summer including many varieties of puddle ducks such as mallards, widgeons, and green-  
41 wing teals; diving ducks such as goldeneye, scaup and grebes. Trumpeter swans and  
42 loons are known to return annually to nest. See Appendix B, Map B-2 for waterfowl  
43 habitat.  
44

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

6  
7 Dall sheep are generally found in the higher elevations but are consistently found at lower  
8 elevations at a few locations including by the outlet of Jim Creek Canyon. This area is  
9 known locally for its high densities of lambs and ewes, and is often characterized as a  
10 “lambing area.” See Appendix B, Map B-4 for sheep habitat.

11  
12 Bears and wolves are occasionally seen and sometimes harvested in this unit. Small  
13 game species such as rabbit and spruce grouse can be found in the vegetated areas.

### 14 15 **Commercial Use**

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

### 20 21 **Facilities**

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

### 23 24 **Trails and Easements**

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

### 30 31 **Cultural and Historical**

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

### 38 39 **Issues**

40 Issues that affect management in this unit include use of OHV's and airboats in  
41 waterbodies, wetlands and adjacent areas and several trespass structures. Many  
42 individuals expressed concern that airboat and OHV use was negatively impacting habitat  
43 for waterfowl, wildlife and spawning salmon. Many other individuals were interested in  
44 maintaining their opportunities to use airboats and OHV's for recreation and as a means  
45 to access fish and game resources. Some individuals indicated that some forms of

1 motorized recreation were negatively impacting their own recreational uses. Trespass  
2 structures in this unit are primarily “duck shacks” used by waterfowl hunters. These  
3 structures, once abandoned, become rundown and eventually end up as litter. They may  
4 also have the effect of displacing some recreational users from utilizing the area around  
5 them.

6  
7 One of the primary access points occurs on an existing easement (Maude Road extension)  
8 on Eklutna Inc. uplands at Mud Lake. Currently the site has a primitive road and boat  
9 launch. It is unclear how much of the current developments are within the existing  
10 easement. The use of the easement increases during the hunting and fishing season, but  
11 is popular with other users throughout the summer and winter season. The area  
12 surrounding the easement on private land is heavily impacted related to use of the  
13 easement and adjacent state waterbody. A management agreement between Eklutna Inc.  
14 and DNR is necessary before DNR can address the impacts occurring on and adjacent to  
15 the easement. If an agreement can be made between the parties, DNR could develop  
16 management and facilities recommendations to address impacts associated with use of  
17 the easement and adjacent state waterbodies.

18  
19 There are other issues concerning this unit that apply to the entire public use area. These  
20 arewide issues are summarized in Chapter 2 rather than in every unit. Many arewide  
21 issues are addressed by draft regulations recently released for public review and comment  
22 and now are in the process of being finalized.

### 23 24 **Management Intent**

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

37  
38 It is intended that DNR will work with ADFG to monitor the swan population within this  
39 unit. If ADFG concludes that the population of swans within the PUA is declining, DNR  
40 will work with ADFG to identify potential causes and will develop appropriate strategies to  
41 address the decline.

42  
43 DNR has developed a recommendation involving the creation of a non-motorized area along  
44 Rippy Trail. This is the only area recommended to be designated for non-motorized use in  
45 the PUA, and it involves the conversion of this trail to non-motorized use. This

1 recommendation is in response to public comments received during the review of  
2 management alternatives in early 2007 and derives from these comments and the subsequent  
3 analysis of potential non-motorized areas within the PUA by DNR. DNR staff concluded  
4 that this approach provides the most practicable approach to the provision of a non-motorized  
5 area within the PUA, and is consistent with legislative direction calling for management of a  
6 “full-spectrum of recreational uses” ... “including motorized and non-motorized.” Following  
7 review and consideration of public comments, the commissioner may decide to modify the  
8 preferred action or propose an entirely different action. An alternative to the preferred action  
9 is discussed below.

### 10 **Management Guidelines**

- 12 • DNR will work with ADFG to monitor trumpeter swan populations within the PUA.  
13 Reviews should be conducted annually and should begin within 5 years from the  
14 adoption of this plan. Based on the results of this review, further management  
15 strategies may be developed.
- 16 • Areas for recreational shooting may be developed on the north side of the Maud Road  
17 extension, east of Mud Lake or in the forested areas east of the Pavilion Parking area.  
18 The area proposed for designation east of Mud Lake is currently used as a shooting  
19 area by the public. The proposed shooting areas are depicted on Map 2-1, pp. 2 - 17.  
20 Time of use or other restrictions will be determined by DNR.
- 21 • Maude Road extension should be upgraded.
- 22 • Recreational discharge of firearms will be prohibited consistent with regulations at  
23 11 AAC 96.015. Legal hunting is not affected by this regulation.
- 24 • A 5 MPH speed limit will be created from the portage at Jim Lake/McRoberts Creek  
25 to the confluence of McRoberts Creek and Jim Creek. This action is proposed to  
26 address the safety issue of watercraft operations on a narrow stream channel with  
27 limited sight distances where both motorized and non-motorized boating occurs.
- 28 • Motorized access on Jim Lake and associated wetlands and waterbodies will be  
29 restricted to not more than 5 horsepower watercraft. This restriction only applies  
30 during the ice-free periods of the lake. This action will protect current use patterns,  
31 while protecting identified sensitive waterfowl nesting in and around Jim Lake and  
32 the associated wetlands and waterbodies. The area affected by this horse power  
33 restriction for watercraft is indicated in Map 3-2, pp. 3 - 11.
- 34 • Rippy Trail Development:
  - 35 ○ **Preferred Action:** The area of approximately 836 acres around the existing  
36 Rippy Trail, including all trails originating at and extending easterly from the  
37 Jim Lake parking area, will be managed for the enhancement of non-  
38 motorized recreational opportunities. This area is depicted on Map 3-3, pp.  
39 3 - 19. All existing trails in this area will be developed to sustainable trail  
40 standards. Because of limited DNR funding to develop trails, it is envisioned  
41 that this will be accomplished through partnering with local stakeholder  
42 groups and individuals. The Rippy Trail and associated trails will be reserved

1 by a public access easement for non-motorized forms of transportation only.<sup>1</sup>  
2 This action will restrict some current uses of the Rippy Trail but will enhance  
3 non-motorized recreation opportunities. Non-motorized recreation  
4 opportunities are currently limited within the public use area.

5 The primary effects of this action would be a reduction in motorized  
6 recreational and commercial opportunities and a reduction in the area  
7 accessible for hunting via motorized means in a portion of the PUA. A de  
8 facto seasonal closure to OHV use on the wetlands connected to Jim Lake and  
9 the forested land and wetlands east of upper Jim Creek are another effect of  
10 this action. Combined with the potential closure of the wetlands west of  
11 Friday Creek, which may result from the conveyance of federal land to  
12 Eklutna Inc., a significant area within the Lakes and Wetlands Unit may be  
13 restricted from motorized use.

- 14 ○ **Alternate Action:** Following review of public comments, the Commissioner  
15 may modify or reject the current “Preferred Action,” propose an entirely new  
16 action, or propose to maintain status quo uses on the Rippy Trail and adjacent  
17 area. Examples of modifications could include spatial and/or temporal  
18 restrictions on uses thus allowing some uses to continue at specific times in  
19 specific areas, modification of the boundary of the non-motorized area, and/or  
20 locate a non-motorized area in another portion of the PUA.

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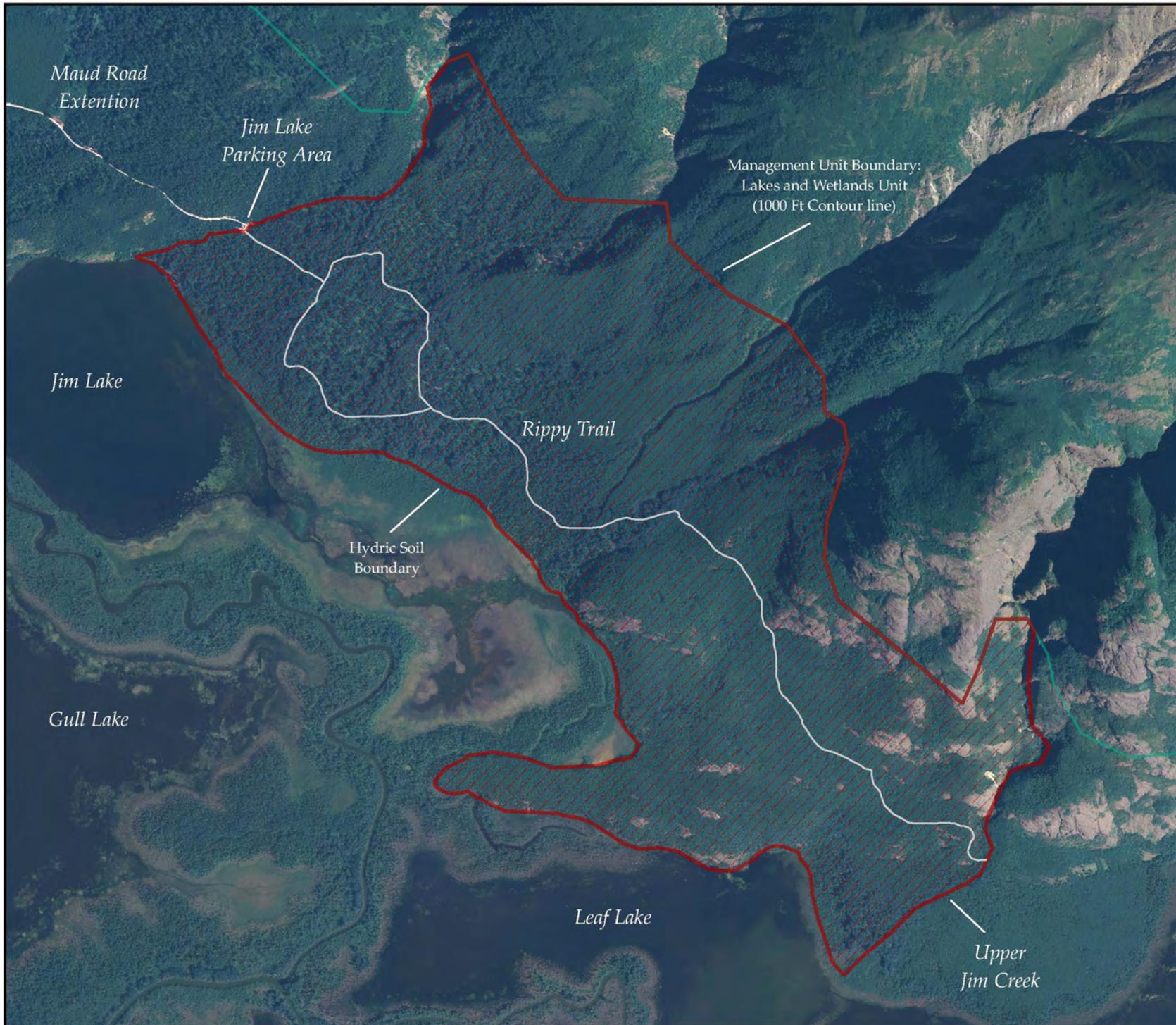
<sup>1</sup> The prohibition on motorized use in the Rippy Non-motorized Area may be reconsidered if access to the eastern portions of the public use area is blocked due to erosion of RST 17 by the Knik River or loss of legal access along RST 17 due to a change in land ownership.

# Knik River Public Use Area

(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

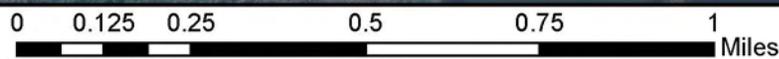
## Preferred Action: Rippy Non-motorized Area Map 3-3

-  Rippy Non-Motorized Area
-  Management Unit Boundary



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

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



**Management Recommendations**

- DNR should work with OHMP and ADFG 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 concession operator for camping area.

**Facilities Recommendations**

- Jim Lake<sup>2</sup>
  - 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 the Jim Lake and the confluence of Jim and McRoberts creeks as depicted on Map 2-2, pp 2 - 29. These sites receive high levels of seasonal use. See Chapter 2 for management guidelines for Public Use Sites.

---

<sup>2</sup> A more detailed site analysis will precede the development of proposed facilities at Jim Lake.

1 **Land Use Designation**

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

4

5 **Allowed/Prohibited Uses**

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

9

## 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, R4 & E, Seward Meridian as well as a small area of upland adjacent to the Knik River in T16N, R5E as depicted on Map 3-1, *Knik River Management Plan Units* pp 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 pp. 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. A few 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 unvegetated 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 ADFG's catalogue of waters important for the spawning, rearing, or migration of anadromous fish.

**Wildlife habitat**

Wildlife habitat in the Upper Flats Unit includes both vegetated and unvegetated 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 rabbit 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 authorization for a tour operator has been issued by DNR in this unit. Commercial uses include OHV, jet-boat, flightseeing, and air-boat 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 areawide issues are summarized in Chapter 2 rather than in every unit. Many areawide issues are addressed by draft regulations recently released for public review and comment and now are in the process of being finalized.

**Management Intent**

The management intent for the Lower Knik Flats Unit is to manage for high levels of public use at the proposed public use site and other popular recreation areas that may develop over time and 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 unvegetated shorelands of the Knik River. See Map 2-3, pp. 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**

- Recreational discharge of firearms will be prohibited per 11 AAC 96.015. Legal hunting is not affected by this regulation.

**Management Recommendations**

- (None)

1 **Facilities Recommendations**

- 2 • (None)
- 3

4 **Public Use Sites**

5 A Public Use Site is established for the face of the glacier near Metal Creek as depicted on  
6 Map 2-2, pp. 2 - 29. This site has a moderate occurrence of public use throughout the year as  
7 a destination for recreational users and for commercial operators. See Public Use Sites in  
8 Chapter 2 for management guidelines.

9

10 **Land Use Designation**

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

13

14 **Allowed/Prohibited Uses**

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

18

## Unit D – Upper Jim Alpine

### Unit Description

This unit boundary encompasses state lands within T 17N, R 3E, Seward Meridian, above the 1000 ft. contour line as depicted on Map 3-1, *Knik River Management Plan Units* pp 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 pp. 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 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 ADFG as anadromous. See Appendix B, Map B-1 for a depiction of those streams and waterbodies included in ADFG'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 rabbit and spruce grouse and ptarmigan can be found in the vegetated areas. See wildlife habitat maps in Appendix B.

1       **Commercial Use**

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

5  
6       **Facilities**

7       No facilities exist within this unit.

8  
9       **Trails and Easements**

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

11  
12       **Cultural and Historical**

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

14  
15       **Issues**

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

18  
19       There are other issues concerning this unit that apply to the entire public use area. These  
20       areawide issues are summarized in Chapter 2 rather than in every unit. Many areawide  
21       issues are addressed by draft regulations recently released for public review and comment  
22       and now are in the process of being finalized.

23  
24       **Management Intent**

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

29  
30       **Management Guidelines**

- 31       • (None)

32  
33       **Management Recommendations**

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

37  
38       **Facilities Recommendations**

- 39       • (None)

40  
41       **Public Use Sites**

42       No public use sites are established.

1 **Land Use Designation**

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

4

5 **Allowed/Prohibited Uses**

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

9

## Unit E – Upper Friday Alpine

### Unit Description

This unit encompasses state lands within Township 16N, R 5 & 6E, T 17N, R 5 & 6E, and T 18N, R 6E, Seward Meridian as depicted on Map 3-1, *Knik River Management Plan Units* pp 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 pp. 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 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 ADFG as anadromous. See Appendix B, Map B-1 for a depiction of those streams and waterbodies included in ADFG'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 rabbit and spruce grouse and ptarmigan can be found in the vegetated areas. See wildlife habitat maps in Appendix B.

1       **Commercial Use**

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

4  
5       **Facilities**

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

7  
8       **Trails and Easements**

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

11  
12      **Cultural and Historical**

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

14  
15      **Issues**

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

19  
20      There are other issues concerning this unit that apply to the entire public use area. These  
21      areawide issues are summarized in Chapter 2 rather than in every unit. Many areawide  
22      issues are addressed by draft regulations recently released for public review and comment  
23      and now are in the process of being finalized.

24  
25      **Management Intent**

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

30  
31      **Management Guidelines**

- 32      • (None)

33  
34      **Management Recommendations**

- 35      • (None)

36  
37      **Facilities Recommendations**

- 38      • (None)

39  
40      **Public Use Sites**

41      No Public Use Sites have been identified.

1 **Land Use Designation**

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

4

5 **Allowed/Prohibited Uses**

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

9

## Unit F – Grasshopper Valley

### Unit Description

This unit encompasses state lands within Township 15N, R5, 6, and 7E, Township 16N, R 5, 6, & 7E, and Township 17N, R 5 & 6E, Seward Meridian as depicted on Map 3-1, *Knik River Management Plan Units* pp 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 pp. 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 ADFG as anadromous. See Appendix B, Map B-1 for a depiction of those streams and waterbodies included in ADFG'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 unvegetated 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 rabbit 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.

1 **Trails and Easements**

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

4  
5 **Cultural and Historical**

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

7  
8 **Issues**

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

14  
15 There are other issues concerning this unit that apply to the entire public use area. These  
16 areawide issues are summarized in Chapter 2 rather than in every unit. Many areawide  
17 issues are addressed by draft regulations recently released for public review and comment  
18 and now are in the process of being finalized.

19  
20 **Management Intent**

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

25  
26 **Management Guidelines**

- 27 • (None)

28  
29 **Management Recommendations**

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

32  
33 **Facilities Recommendations**

- 34 • (None)

35  
36 **Public Use Sites**

37 A portion of the Glacier Public Use Site occurs within this unit as depicted on Map 2-2 pp.  
38 2 - 29.

39  
40 **Land Use Designation**

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

1 **Allowed/Prohibited Uses**

2 All land uses (including commercial recreation) may be authorized except for uses/activities  
3 that are designated as “prohibited” in Chapter 4, pp 4 - 4. Uses may be allowed if they are  
4 consistent with the legislation, pertinent state laws, regulations, and management guidelines.  
5

## Unit G – Glacier

### Unit Description

This unit encompasses state lands within Township 15N, R5 & 6E, and Township 16N, R 5E, Seward Meridian as indicated on Map 3-1, *Knik River Management Plan Units* pp 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 pp. 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 and 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 ADFG as an anadromous stream. Coho salmon present in the Lake Fork Knik River. See Appendix B, Map B-1 for a depiction of those streams and waterbodies included in ADFG'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 arewide issues are summarized in Chapter 2 rather than in every unit. Many arewide issues are addressed by draft regulations recently released for public review and comment and now are in the process of being finalized.

**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**

A portion of the Glacier Public Use Site occurs within this unit as depicted on Map 2-2, pp. 2 - 29.

**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, pp 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, R 5 & 6E, Township 17N, R 5 & 6E, and Township 18N, R 6E, Seward Meridian as depicted on Map 3-1, *Knik River Management Plan Units* pp 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 pp. 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 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 ADFG'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.

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

5  
6 **Facilities**

7 There are no facilities except those related to mining claims.  
8

9 **Trails and Easements**

10 The Knik Glacier Trail (a state recognized RS 2477) provides access to the southern  
11 portion of this unit. A few user created trails provide access to areas adjacent to the Knik  
12 Glacier Trail.  
13

14 **Cultural and Historical**

15 Historic structures and artifacts or sites related to mining and Native cultures may be  
16 located in the Metal Creek Unit.  
17

18 **Issues**

19 Because of the difficulty in access, there are few management issues. Access for private  
20 landowners and miners will be maintained.  
21

22 There are other issues concerning this unit that apply to the entire public use area. These  
23 areawide issues are summarized in Chapter 2 rather than in every unit. Many areawide  
24 issues are addressed by draft regulations recently released for public review and comment  
25 and now are in the process of being finalized.  
26

27 **Management Intent**

28 The management intent for the Metal Creek Unit is to manage for low levels of public use  
29 and to enhance recreational opportunities by applying management guidelines that apply to  
30 the entire public use area. It will be managed to provide the full spectrum of public uses,  
31 while mitigating impacts of use on fish and wildlife habitat and protecting public safety.  
32 Access for private land owners and access for mining will be maintained. DNR will also  
33 address impacts to principle fish and wildlife habitats through the TMP described in  
34 Appendix D.  
35

36 **Management Guidelines**

- 37 • DNR will maintain access for mining activities and for private landowners.  
38

39 **Management Recommendations**

- 40 • (None)  
41

42 **Facilities Recommendations**

- 43 • (None)  
44

1 **Public Use Sites**

2 No Public Use Sites have been identified.

3

4 **Land Use Designation**

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

7

8 **Allowed/Prohibited Uses**

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

12

1 **Chapter 4: Implementation**

2

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23

# 1 **Chapter 4: Implementation**

## 2 **Introduction**

3

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

11

12

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

14

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

19

20 All state lands will be managed consistent with the purposes provided in AS 41.23.180 and  
21 with the more specific guidance provided in this plan. Regulations addressing significant  
22 issues of safety and public use are proposed by DNR. Additional regulations necessary to  
23 implement management guidelines in the plan will be developed subsequent to plan  
24 adoption.

25

26

## 27 **Access to Public Lands**

28

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

36

37

## 1 **Trails Management Process**

2  
3 DNR will initiate a Trails Management Process subsequent to the approval of this plan to  
4 identify existing trails and assess the level and impact of current use on fish wildlife and their  
5 habitat. DNR should consult with ADFG to determine if uses are having a deleterious impact  
6 on fish and wildlife. The TMP will also identify where additional trails are needed to  
7 enhance recreational user opportunities or reduce impacts to fisheries and wildlife habitat.  
8 The initial phase of this process will address trails in vegetated areas within the Lower Knik  
9 Flats and Lakes and Wetlands units. The second phase will address trails in the remaining  
10 units. Details of the TMP are included in Appendix D.

## 13 **Knik River Special Use Areas**

14  
15 Certain lands, while not included in the PUA legal description, should be managed in a  
16 manner consistent with the PUA when they are acquired by DNR. These parcels are located  
17 adjacent to the KRPUA, but were not included in the legal boundary of the PUA. Parcel one  
18 is owned by the State of Alaska. Parcel two is owned by MHT and will soon be conveyed to  
19 DNR. Parcel three is owned by MSB and may be conveyed to the state in the near future.  
20 The fourth parcel is privately owned and is currently for sale. These parcels are proposed to  
21 be designated as SUA's because of their proximity to the PUA and levels of use related to the  
22 PUA. Parcel one was proposed for designation as a SUA (ADL 230206) in Phase I  
23 Regulations and may be approved prior to the adoption of this plan. See Phase I regulations  
24 in Appendix C. Parcels two, three, and four are proposed for designation as SUA's through  
25 Phase II regulations once they are acquired and all interests are conveyed to the State of  
26 Alaska. The existing SUA will be amended to include these additional parcels. All three  
27 parcels are to be managed consistent with the management direction for provided in this plan  
28 for Unit A. Management recommendations and policies developed through the plan will  
29 apply to state lands within the boundary of the PUA and the proposed SUA's. See *General*  
30 *Land Status* Map 1-2 pp. 1 - 5 for a depiction of the parcels mentions above.

## 33 **Amendments to Current Area Plans**

34  
35 When adopted, the Knik River Public Use Area Management Plan will function as the land  
36 use plan for the area of the PUA under AS 38.04.065 authorities. Currently, land within the  
37 PUA is included in both the Susitna Area Plan (SAP) and the Prince William Sound Area  
38 Plan (PWSAP) and both plans provide some level of management guidance.

39  
40 Included in Appendix F are amendments to the SAP and the PWSAP. Amendment of these  
41 plans is required in order to reconcile discrepancies between the management plan and the  
42 two current area plans, and to ensure that the Knik River Management Plan functions as the  
43 (only) management plan for state land in the planning boundary.

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

5  
6 Amendment of the PWSAP was required to shift the boundary of the existing units in the  
7 PWSAP southward from their current location so there was not a conflict with the Knik  
8 River Public Use Area Management Plan. PWSAP boundaries were re-drawn to remove the  
9 area of the PWSAP that is now included in the PUA. The effect of this action is that this  
10 management plan becomes the basis for management for those three townships that were  
11 previously managed under the PWSAP.

12  
13 Amendment of the SAP was required to shift the boundary of the existing units in the SAP  
14 northward from their current location so there was not a conflict with the Knik River Public  
15 Use Area Management Plan. SAP boundaries were re-drawn to remove the area of the SAP  
16 that is now included in the PUA. The effect of this action is that this management plan  
17 becomes the basis for management for those three townships that were previously managed  
18 under the SAP.

## 19 20 21 **Land Classification Order**

22  
23 Classification of the lands within the PUA is required under AS 38.04.065 and AS 38.05.300,  
24 and is necessary for certain authorizations issued by DNR.

25  
26 Appendix G includes a Land Classification Order (LCO). It rescinds all previous LCO's.  
27 All lands within the PUA will be classified Public Recreation and Wildlife Habitat. The LCO  
28 consolidates and supersedes all the various LCO's that preceded this planning effort. Prior  
29 LCO's classified the area as Public Recreation, Wildlife Habitat, and Resource Management.  
30 The new LCO is based on the enactment of the Knik River Management Plan as the  
31 foundation for land use planning required under AS 38.04.065(b) and for classification under  
32 AS 38.05.300.

## 33 34 35 **Enforcement**

36  
37 The Southcentral Regional Office (SCRO) will continue to work with the Department of  
38 Public Safety (DPS) and local law enforcement agencies to carry out law enforcement  
39 responsibilities within the Public Use Area. Currently DNR has provided a Reimbursable  
40 Services Account to DPS to pay for enforcement activities conducted by DPS within the  
41 PUA. DNR may pursue authorizing employees as peace officers within the PUA. This  
42 authority was granted through AS 41.23.210. Appropriate training and policy will be  
43 developed prior to DNR employees becoming designated peace officers  
44

1 DNR is developing regulations as described in 11 AAC 96.015 to address many issues  
2 identified through the public process (see Appendix C for proposed regulations). These  
3 regulations directly resulted from input received during meetings and public comment  
4 periods and discussions with law enforcement and the Attorney General's Office.  
5 Regulations necessary to implement the plan will be developed subsequent to the adoption of  
6 the plan.

### 9 **Title 38 Requirements**

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

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

### 23 **Authority of Management Plan**

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

### 31 **Allowed and Prohibited Uses**

33 All uses that are consistent with administrative regulations and the management guidelines of  
34 this plan are allowed. Land disposals, timber harvest (commercial and private<sup>1</sup>) and large  
35 scale strip mining or open pit mining for leasable or locatable minerals are prohibited.

---

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

## 1 **Proposed Regulations**

2  
3 Draft phase one regulations were recently released for public review and comment. They  
4 address issues of great public concern that were identified early in the planning process. These  
5 were developed concurrent with the planning process, and are consistent with the management  
6 intent, guidelines and recommendations in this plan. Phase one regulations can be found in  
7 Appendix C.  
8

9 Subsequent to the adoption of the management plan, phase two regulations will be  
10 developed. Phase two regulations are those regulations that are derived from the Knik River  
11 Management Plan and are necessary to implement the plan. These regulations will be  
12 developed to address issues at discrete locations or areas. DNR may consider additional or  
13 modify existing regulations in the future to address impacts to resources, public safety or  
14 changes in public use. These regulations will undergo a separate public notice and review  
15 period after the final plan is adopted. See Appendix C for phase two regulations and for an  
16 explanation of what issues these regulations are related to and what each intends to  
17 accomplish.  
18

19 Regulations necessary to implement this plan include:  
20

- 21 • Motorized uses will be prohibited within the Rippy Non-motorized Area<sup>2</sup>.
- 22 • Shooting areas will be established at the existing site on Maude Road, approximately  
23 ½ of mile southeast of Mud Lake and in the area of forested state land east of the  
24 Pavilion Parking area.
- 25 • Motorized use will be prohibited on Manmade Lake from May 1 to September 30 to  
26 provide for the safety of recreational users.
- 27 • Motorized use within 100 feet of the water of Manmade Lake will be restricted to 10  
28 mph or less to provide for the safety of recreational users in this area.
- 29 • Motorized boat use on a segment of McRoberts Creek will be restricted to 5mph or  
30 less to provide for safety of non-motorized users in an area with limited sight  
31 distances.
- 32 • Motorized boat use on Jim Lake and associated wetlands will be restricted to 5  
33 horsepower or less to maintain existing use patterns and protect waterfowl nesting  
34 habitat.
- 35 • Camping and recreational discharge of firearms will be restricted at public use sites.
- 36 • Additional regulations may be developed through a public process as needed by DNR  
37 for the management of the PUA to include but not limited to unauthorized activities at  
38 public use sites, stream crossing violations, and commercial use violations.

---

<sup>2</sup> This assumes that the Preferred Alternative recommended for the Lakes and Wetland Unit is adopted by the DNR Commissioner or a variant approach is selected that will require the use of regulation.

- 1       • Amend regulations to allow rutting and ground disturbance in excess of 6 inches for  
2       the area depicted on Map 2-3, pp. 2 -35.  
3  
4

## 5 **Fees**

6  
7 DNR has evaluated the institution of a fee program to pay for facilities and management of  
8 the PUA. DNR will recommend to the Legislature that a fee schedule be implemented for  
9 development and subsequent management of facilities and for the ongoing management of  
10 the PUA. A fee schedule should not be implemented until such facilities are developed.  
11  
12

## 13 **Other Lands**

14  
15 There are state, borough, and private-owned lands adjacent, but not within the legal  
16 boundaries of the PUA, that have high levels of use and impacts associated with the PUA.  
17 The state owns 252 acres of such lands on the western boundary of the Public Use Area. The  
18 MSB owns approximately 471 acres of land adjacent to the PUA at the Pavilion Parking  
19 Area on Sullivan Road. The Mental Health Trust owns approximately 78 acres of land east  
20 of the Old Glenn Highway Bridge. The fourth parcel is approximately 9 acres of private land  
21 on the northeast side of the Old Glenn Highway Bridge. See *General Land Status* Map 1-2,  
22 pp. 1 - 5 for the location of these lands. The three parcels that are not currently owned and  
23 managed by DNR were identified for acquisition by the state. See *Parcel Acquisition*,  
24 Chapter 2, pp. 2 - 23 for information related to acquisition of these lands.  
25

26 The plan stipulates how the state land is to be managed and makes recommendations for  
27 these lands. In each instance, the intent is to provide consistent management for highly used  
28 lands adjacent to the PUA. Until they are included into the PUA, all acquired lands will be  
29 recommended as a SUA and will be managed consistent with the intent, guidelines and  
30 recommendations for the PUA.  
31

32 The following recommendations pertain to state, Mental Health Trust, MSB, and private land  
33 outside of the legal boundaries of the PUA. These parcels of land adjoin the PUA and are  
34 currently used by the public for recreation and access, and the parcels essentially function as  
35 part of the PUA. For this reason, and to provide uniformity of management, their acquisition  
36 is recommended. These recommendations are mandatory on state land, but discretionary on  
37 MSB, MHT, and private land until the parcels in question are conveyed to the state. through  
38 the Replacement Land Process, which is an agreement between DNR and the Mental Health  
39 Trust Authority as to how to deal with land conveyed in error to the Trust Authority. See  
40 *Parcel Acquisition* in Chapter 2, pp. 2 - 25 for additional information related to these lands.  
41

**1 State Land within Lands within Section 31, Township 17N, R3E<sup>3</sup>**

2 State land within Section 31, Township 17N, R3E<sup>4</sup> is recommended for designation as a  
3 SUA (ADL 230206). SUA designations are placed on sites and areas identified for more  
4 intensive management by DNR. This designation restricts some uses that would otherwise  
5 be classified “generally allowed” under 11 AAC 96.020. The original SUA designation was  
6 included in Phase I regulations. The amended SUA is included in Appendix E in this plan.  
7

**8 Management Recommendations**

- 9
- 10 • This land will be managed consistent with the management guidelines of the entire  
11 PUA as well as the unit specific guidelines for Unit A as well as the management  
12 provided in the SAU (ADL 230206). See Appendix E for specific management of  
13 land included in the SUA.
  - 14 • This land will be recommended to the Legislature to be included in the legal  
15 boundary of the PUA.  
16

**17 Matanuska-Susitna Borough Lands**

18 The *Asset Management Plan for Borough-Owned land in the Butte Area* states that the  
19 borough owned portion of the Jim Creek Parcel should be developed for “...motorized  
20 recreation off-road vehicle including local off-road motorized vehicle training and learning  
21 area as well as a regional access point to Knik River and Knik Glacier.” This management  
22 intent is consistent with the legislatively designated purposes of the PUA and the  
23 management guidelines contained in the management plan. These lands are recommended  
24 for designation as a SUA.  
25

**26 Management Recommendations**

- 27
- 28 • The state will work with MSB to acquire a portion of the Jim Creek Parcel that  
29 encompasses the Pavilion Parking Area and Sexton and Envy trails. If these lands are  
30 acquired it is recommended that they be included in the legal boundary of the PUA  
31 and managed consistent with the adjoining unit.
  - 32 • Until this land is acquired by the State, DNR will work cooperatively with the MSB  
33 to ensure that facility development and other significant action that the Borough may  
34 undertake are coordinated with the eventual use of this land as part of the PUA.
  - 35 • Once acquired by the State, this land will be managed consistent with the  
36 management guidelines of the entire PUA as well as the unit specific guidelines for  
37 Unit A. The existing SUA (ADL 230206) will be amended to include all acquired  
38 parcels. See Appendix E for specific management of land included in the SUA.

---

<sup>3</sup> Addressed in Phase I regulations

<sup>4</sup> These state lands are located outside of the KRPUA but are included within the planning boundary.

- 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**

Based on a 1994 Settlement Agreement between the Trust and the State, this parcel is to be returned to the State. Because of its location and heavy recreation use, this parcel is included within the PUA planning boundary.

### **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. Currently, the private parcel on the northeast end of the Old Glenn Highway Bridge is for sale. 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.

## 1 Management Recommendations

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

## 11 Navigable Waterbodies

12  
13 This management plan is based upon the Public Trust Doctrine, which provides for access,  
14 movement and commerce on waterbodies that are navigable. Under this doctrine and the Equal  
15 Footing doctrine applied in the Statehood Act, the state owns and manages all navigable  
16 waterbodies (including the water column and the bed of the waterbody). Through a separate  
17 action, DNR maintains that the Knik River is navigable and that the rights under the public  
18 Trust Doctrine apply. Shorelands within the Knik River are therefore under state ownership  
19 and management, except for those areas that are likely to be conveyed to Eklutna Inc. A more  
20 complete description of the Public Trust Doctrine is included in Appendix H.

## 23 Coordination with Other Agencies

24  
25 The state will coordinate activities with other state, federal and borough agencies as  
26 appropriate and necessary. Projects proposed within the planning area will be consistent with  
27 state, federal and borough requirements of law, ordinance, and code.

## 30 Procedures for Plan Review, Modification, and Amendment

31  
32 Categories of management intent, policies, implementation actions, and management  
33 guidelines of this plan may be changed if conditions warrant. The plan will be updated  
34 periodically in response to new data or changing resource conditions or uses.

35  
36 The various kinds of changes allowed in 11 AAC 55.030 are:

- 37 • “A revision to a land use plan is subject to the planning process requirements of  
38 AS 38.04.065. For the purposes of this section and AS 38.04.065, a ‘revision’ is an  
39 amendment or special exception to a land use plan as follows:
  - 40 ○ An ‘amendment’ permanently changes the land use plan by adding to or modifying  
41 the basic management intent for one or more of the plan’s subunits or by changing  
42 its allowed or prohibited uses, policies, or guidelines. For example, an amendment  
43 might close to new mineral entry an area that the plan designated to be open, allow  
44

- 1 a land use in an area where the plan prohibited it, or allow land to be opened to  
2 homestead entry in an area that the plan designated for retention in public  
3 ownership.
- 4 ○ A ‘special exception’ does not permanently change the provisions of a land use plan  
5 and cannot be used as the basis for a reclassification of the subunit. Instead, it  
6 allows a one-time, limited-purpose variance of the plan’s provisions, without  
7 changing the plan’s general management intent or guidelines. For example, a  
8 special exception might be used to grant an eligible applicant a preference right  
9 under AS 38.05.035 to purchase land in a subunit designated for retention in public  
10 ownership. A special exception might be made if complying with the plan would  
11 be excessively burdensome or impractical or if compliance would be inequitable to  
12 a third party, and if the purposes and spirit of the plan can be achieved despite the  
13 exception.
- 14 ○ A minor change to a land use plan is not considered a revision under AS 38.04.065.  
15 A ‘minor change’ is a change that does not modify or add to the plan’s basic intent,  
16 and that serves only to clarify the plan, make it consistent, facilitate its  
17 implementation, or make technical corrections. Authority: AS 38.04.065,  
18 AS 38.04.900, AS 38.05.020, AS 38.05.300.”  
19  
20

## 21 **Recommended Future Studies**

22  
23 Management of recreational use and protection of fish and wildlife and their habitat may  
24 require periodic study and monitoring. The actions listed below will allow DNR to assess  
25 effectiveness of management guidelines and regulations to ensure management remains  
26 adaptive to changing use patterns or changing resource conditions. They will provide a base  
27 of knowledge on existing fish and wildlife populations and will allow DNR to assess the  
28 effectiveness of management actions. All recommended studies and monitoring is subject to  
29 acquiring necessary funding and staffing. Recommended studies include:  
30

- 31 • Continue to gather baseline data on resources and habitat and fish and wildlife  
32 populations. This data will be collected from ADFG and other available scientific  
33 literature. Baseline data gathering would allow DNR staff to learn more about the  
34 habitat requirements and use patterns of the fish and wildlife resources throughout the  
35 PUA.
- 36 • Initiate a user survey to determine the type, levels and location of use within the  
37 PUA. A user survey could also provide information on changing use patterns or if  
38 conflict situations exist elsewhere. Survey may include a section that addresses  
39 commercial use within the PUA.

- 1       • Subsequent to the adoption of the plan, DNR will work with ADFG to monitor fish  
2       and wildlife, impacts to resources, and effectiveness of management actions. The  
3       intent is to determine if significant deleterious impacts are occurring to fish and  
4       wildlife, or other resources, related to use in the PUA. Should monitoring indicate  
5       that these types of impacts are occurring, the agencies will work together to develop  
6       timely and appropriate strategies to address the deleterious impacts.
- 7       • If necessary, DNR will seek additional funding to carry out additional studies on  
8       impacts of use on fish and wildlife resources, habitat, and other state resources.  
9

1 **Appendices**

2

3 Appendix A: Glossary..... A - 1

4 Appendix B: Fish and Wildlife Habitat ..... B - 1

5 Map B-1: Anadromous Streams and Waterbodies..... B - 1

6 Map B-2: Waterfowl Habitat ..... B - 3

7 Map B-3: Moose Habitat ..... B - 5

8 Map B-4: Dall Sheep Habitat..... B - 7

9 Appendix C: Proposed Regulations ..... C - 1

10 Table C-1: Phase 1 Regulations (Proposed) ..... C - 1

11 Table C-2: Phase 2 Regulations ..... C - 7

12 Appendix D: Trails Management Process ..... D - 1

13 Table D-1: Trail Management Classes ..... D - 6

14 Appendix E: Special Use Area Designation ..... E - 1

15 Map E-1: Proposed Knik River Special Use Areas ..... E - 3

16 Appendix F: Plan Amendments ..... F - 1

17 Appendix G: Land Classification Order ..... G - 1

18 Appendix H: Public Trust Doctrine ..... H - 1

19 Appendix I: Legislation ..... I - 1

20 Appendix J: Implementation of Commercial Use Policy ..... J - 1

21 Appendix K: Knik River Public Use Area Signature Page..... K - 1

22

23

## 1 **Appendix A: Glossary**

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

3

4 **AAC.** Alaska Administrative Codes.

5

6 **ADFG.** Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

7

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

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

14

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

17

18 **AS.** Alaska Statutes.

19

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

21

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

26

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

29

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

32

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

36

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

39

- 1 **Commercial Recreation.** Recreational uses of lands, waters, and resources for business or  
2 financial gain, such as guided sport fishing, guided and outfitted sport hunting and guided  
3 recreation.  
4
- 5 **DNR.** The Department of Natural Resources.  
6
- 7 **Developed Recreational Facilities.** These include any of the following: sanitary structures  
8 including trash receptacles, campground, picnic area, rest area, visitor information center,  
9 swim beach or area, trailhead, and parking area.  
10
- 11 **Division.** The Division of Mining, Land & Water  
12
- 13 **DMLW.** Same as “Division.” See “Division.”  
14
- 15 **Easement.** An interest in land owned by another that entitles its holder to a specific limited  
16 use or purpose.  
17
- 18 **17(b) Easement.** An easement across Native corporation land reserved under the Alaska  
19 Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 (ANCSA). Uses of the easements are limited to  
20 transportation purposes and other uses specified in the act and in conveyance documents.  
21
- 22 **Facilities.** Includes buildings, parking areas, camping areas, a boat launch area or ramp,  
23 shelters/cabins, and sanitary facilities.  
24
- 25 **Facility Recommendations.** A recommended type and character of facility consistent with  
26 the plans intent that allows the manager to use discretion in deciding the specific means for  
27 best achieving the intent based on particular circumstances and further site analysis.  
28
- 29 **Feasible.** Capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period  
30 of time, taking into account economic, environmental, technical, and safety factors.  
31
- 32 **Fish and Wildlife.** Any species of aquatic fish, invertebrates, and amphibians, in any stage  
33 of their life cycle, and all species of birds and mammals, found or that may be introduced in  
34 Alaska, except domestic birds and mammals.  
35
- 36 **Fish Spawning and Rearing Area.** Area identified as important for fish spawning and  
37 rearing.  
38
- 39 **Goal.** A statement of basic intent or general condition. Goals are not quantifiable and do not  
40 have specific dates for achievement; they are long-term in orientation.  
41
- 42 **Habitat.** Broadly defined, habitat consists of all the abiotic and biotic factors included  
43 within an area in which a given species can live and reproduce successfully over time.  
44

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

3  
4 **Legislatively Designated Area.** An area set aside by the state legislature for special  
5 management actions and retained in public ownership.

6  
7 **Locatable Minerals.** Includes both metallic (gold, silver, lead, etc.) and non-metallic  
8 (feldspar, asbestos, and mica, etc.) minerals.

9  
10 **Management Area.** An area established around identifiable features or resources used to  
11 reduce the effect of an activity or use on the feature or resources.

12  
13 **Management Guidelines.** A specific course of action that must be followed when a DNR  
14 manager permits, leases, or otherwise authorizes use of state lands or resources. Guidelines  
15 range from giving general guidance for decision-making or identifying factors that need to be  
16 considered, to setting detailed standards for on-the-ground-decisions. Some guidelines state  
17 the intent that must be followed and allow flexibility in achieving it.

18  
19 **Management intent statement.** The statements that define the department's near and long-  
20 term management objectives and the methods to achieve those objectives.

21  
22 **Management Recommendation.** A recommended course of action that is consistent with  
23 the plan's intent that allows the resource manager to use discretion in deciding the specific  
24 means for best achieving the intent. Deviation from management recommendations requires  
25 written justification.

26  
27 **Management Unit.** Lands that are similar topographically and have similar use patterns; in  
28 this plan there are eight units described herein.

29  
30 **Materials.** Includes sand, gravel, rock, peat, pumice, cinders, clay, and sod.

31  
32 **May.** Same as "should." See "should."

33  
34 **Mining.** Any structure or activity for commercial exploration and recovery of minerals,  
35 including, but not limited to resource transfer facilities, camps, and other support facilities  
36 associated with mineral development. The term "mining" does not refer to offshore  
37 prospecting.

38  
39 **Mining claim.** Rights to deposits of minerals, subject to AS 38.05.185-38.05.275, in or on  
40 state land that is open to claim staking may be acquired by discovery, location and recording  
41 as prescribed in AS 38.05.185-38.05.275. The locator has the exclusive right of possession  
42 and extraction of the minerals lying within the boundaries of the claim, subject to  
43 AS 38.05.185 -38.05.275.

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

3  
4 **Multiple use.** Means the management of state land and its various resource values so that it  
5 is used in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the people of  
6 Alaska, making the most judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources or  
7 related services over areas large enough to provide sufficient latitude for periodic  
8 adjustments in use to conform to changing needs and conditions; it includes:

- 9  
10 a) the use of some land for less than all of the resources, and  
11 b) a combination of balanced and diverse resource uses that takes into account the short-  
12 term and long-term needs of present and future generations for renewable and  
13 nonrenewable resources, including, but not limited to, recreation, range, timber,  
14 minerals, watershed, wildlife and fish, and natural scenic, scientific, and historic  
15 values. [AS 38.04.910]

16  
17 **Native-owned land.** Land that is patented or will be patented to a Native corporation.

18  
19 **Native-selected land.** Federally owned land that is selected by a Native corporation but not  
20 yet patented.

21  
22 **Navigable.** Used in its legal context, it refers to lakes and rivers that meet federal or state  
23 criteria for navigability. Under the Equal Footing Doctrine, the Alaska Statehood Act, and  
24 the Submerged Lands Act, the state owns land under navigable waterbodies.

25  
26 **Off Highway Vehicle.** A recreational-type off-road or all-terrain vehicle with a curb weight  
27 of up to 1,500 pounds, including a snowmobile and four-wheeler.

28  
29 **Ordinary High Water Mark.** That line on the shore of a non-tidal river or stream that  
30 reflects the highest level of water during an ordinary year and is established by fluctuations  
31 of water and indicated by physical characteristics such as clear, natural line impressed on the  
32 bank; shelving; changes in the character of the soil; destruction of terrestrial vegetation; the  
33 presence of litter and debris; or other appropriate means that consider the characteristics of  
34 the surrounding area.

35  
36 **Policy.** An intended course of action or a principle for guiding actions; in this plan, DNR  
37 policies for land and resource management include goals, management intent statements,  
38 management guidelines, land use designations, implementation plans and procedures, and  
39 various other statements of DNR's intentions.

40  
41 **PLO.** Abbreviation of Public Land Order. A PLO is withdrawal federal land from the  
42 public domain for specific purposes. In the PUA, PLO 3324 is a federal land withdrawal for  
43 the purpose of protecting public recreation values.

1 **Primitive Recreational Facility.** Any structure that is not one of those listed under  
2 Developed Recreational Facility. These include user created airstrips, boat launches, or  
3 camping areas/sites.  
4

5 **Sensitive Habitat.** Habitat determined by DNR to be important for a particular life stage of  
6 fish and wildlife. They are usually localized in an area and are usually characterized by a  
7 greater number and density of species than in adjacent areas. In the context of this plan,  
8 these areas are to receive a higher level of management than other habitat areas. If  
9 significant deleterious impacts occur to this habitat, local distribution level impacts may  
10 occur.  
11

12 **Shoreland.** Land belonging to the state that is covered by navigable, nontidal water up to the  
13 ordinary high water mark as modified by accretion, erosion or reliction. (See definition of  
14 Navigable.) Shorelands are generally lake bottoms or the beds of navigable rivers and  
15 streams.  
16

17 **State land.** A generic term meaning all state land, including all state-owned and state-  
18 selected uplands, all shorelands, tidelands and submerged lands. See also definitions of state-  
19 owned land and state-selected land as well as definitions for shorelands. ‘State Land’  
20 excludes lands owned by the University of Alaska, the Mental Health Trust Authority, or by  
21 state agencies that have acquired through deed.  
22

23 **State-owned land.** Land that is patented or will be patented to the state, including uplands,  
24 tidelands, shorelands, and submerged lands.  
25

26 **Sustainable Trail.** A trail that conforms to its terrain and environment, is capable of  
27 handling its intended use without serious degradation. These typically do not require  
28 extensive re-routing and re-building of current trails.  
29

30 **Swan and Loon Nesting Habitat.** The area of habitat that supports active nesting of  
31 trumpeter swans and loons. In this plan, the majority of this type of habitat is located in the  
32 Lakes and Wetlands Unit.  
33

34 **Shall.** Same as “will.” See “will.”  
35

36 **Should.** States intent for a course of action or a set of conditions to be achieved. Guidelines  
37 modified by the word “should” state the plan’s intent and allow the manager to use discretion  
38 in deciding the specific means for best achieving the intent or if the particular circumstances  
39 justify deviations from the intended action or set of conditions. See Directors Policy File 06-  
40 01 for guidance.  
41

42 **Trail.** A trail has an identifiable tread and evidence of repeated use. In the PUA, DNR will  
43 identify trails that will be managed consistent with the TMP.  
44

- 1 **Tree.** For the purposes of this plan, “tree” means a woody perennial plant with a single,  
2 well-defined stem, a definite crown shape, and a diameter at breast height of 5.0 inches or  
3 greater.  
4
- 5 **Trespass.** To enter upon land without authorization from the land owner.  
6
- 7 **Trespass structure.** A permanent or temporary structure built on land owned by the State of  
8 Alaska without benefit of an authorization by DNR.  
9
- 10 **Unit.** See Management Unit.  
11
- 12 **Uplands.** Lands above mean high water, ordinary high water mark, or lands that do not meet  
13 the definition of a wetland.  
14
- 15 **Use Level.** A representation of the level of use occurring in a unit. Three use levels are  
16 provided in the plan. They are low, moderate, and high.  
17
- 18 **Waterfowl Nesting Area.** Areas of waterfowl nesting habitat adjacent to waterbodies.  
19
- 20 **Wetlands.** Means those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a  
21 frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do  
22 support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions.  
23 Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs and similar areas.  
24
- 25 **Wildlife.** All species, especially mammals, living in a natural undomesticated state.  
26
- 27 **Will.** Requires a course of action or a set of conditions to be achieved. A guideline modified  
28 by the word “will” must be followed by DNR land managers in the issuance of authorizations  
29 and other decisions. Deviation from plan designations, management intent, or management  
30 guidelines modified by “will” requires a plan amendment. (See Chapter 4, Types of Plan  
31 Changes). See Directors Policy File 06-01 for guidance.  
32

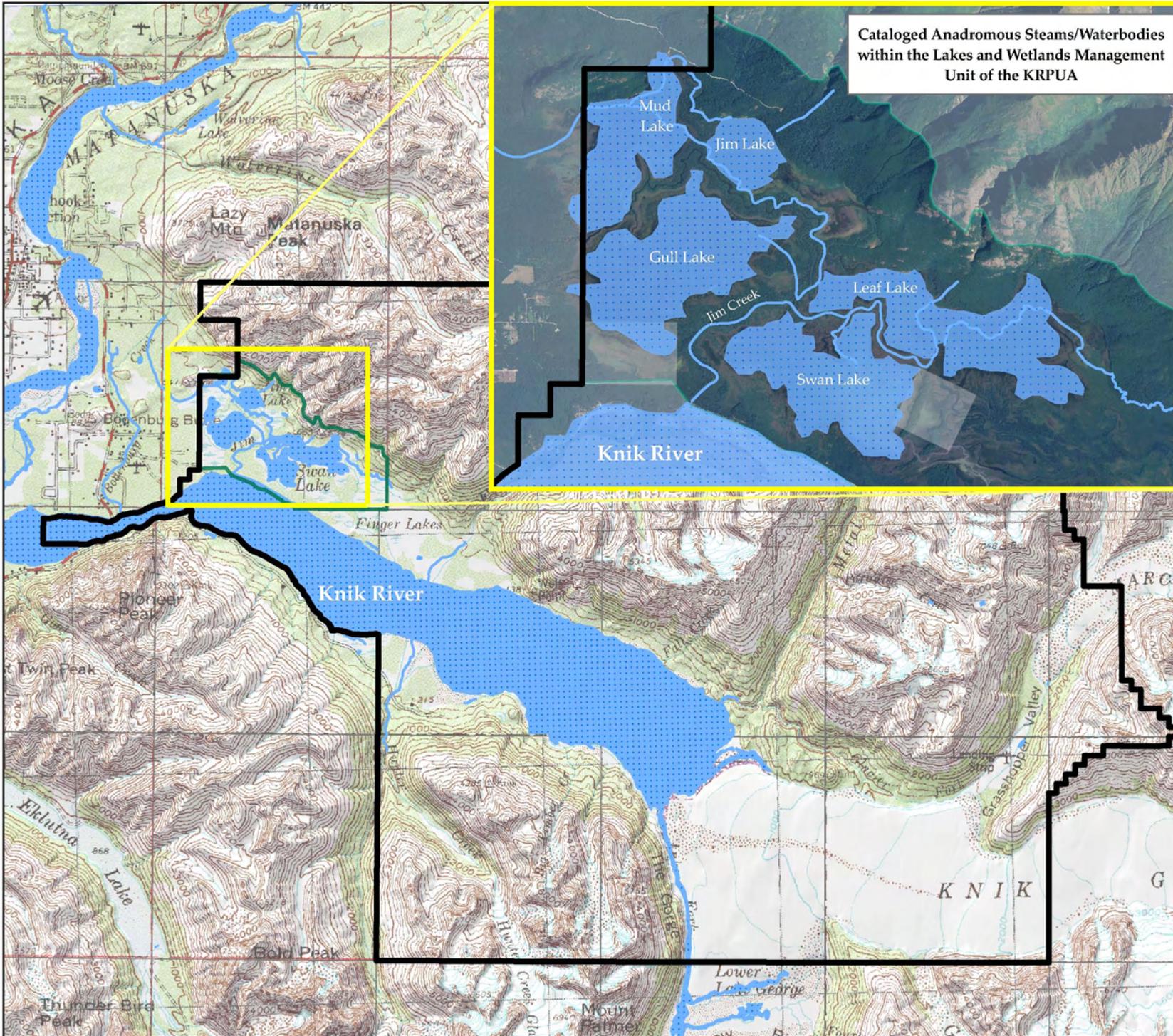
# Knik River Public Use Area

(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

## Anadromous Streams and Waterbodies

### Map B-1

-  KRPUA 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

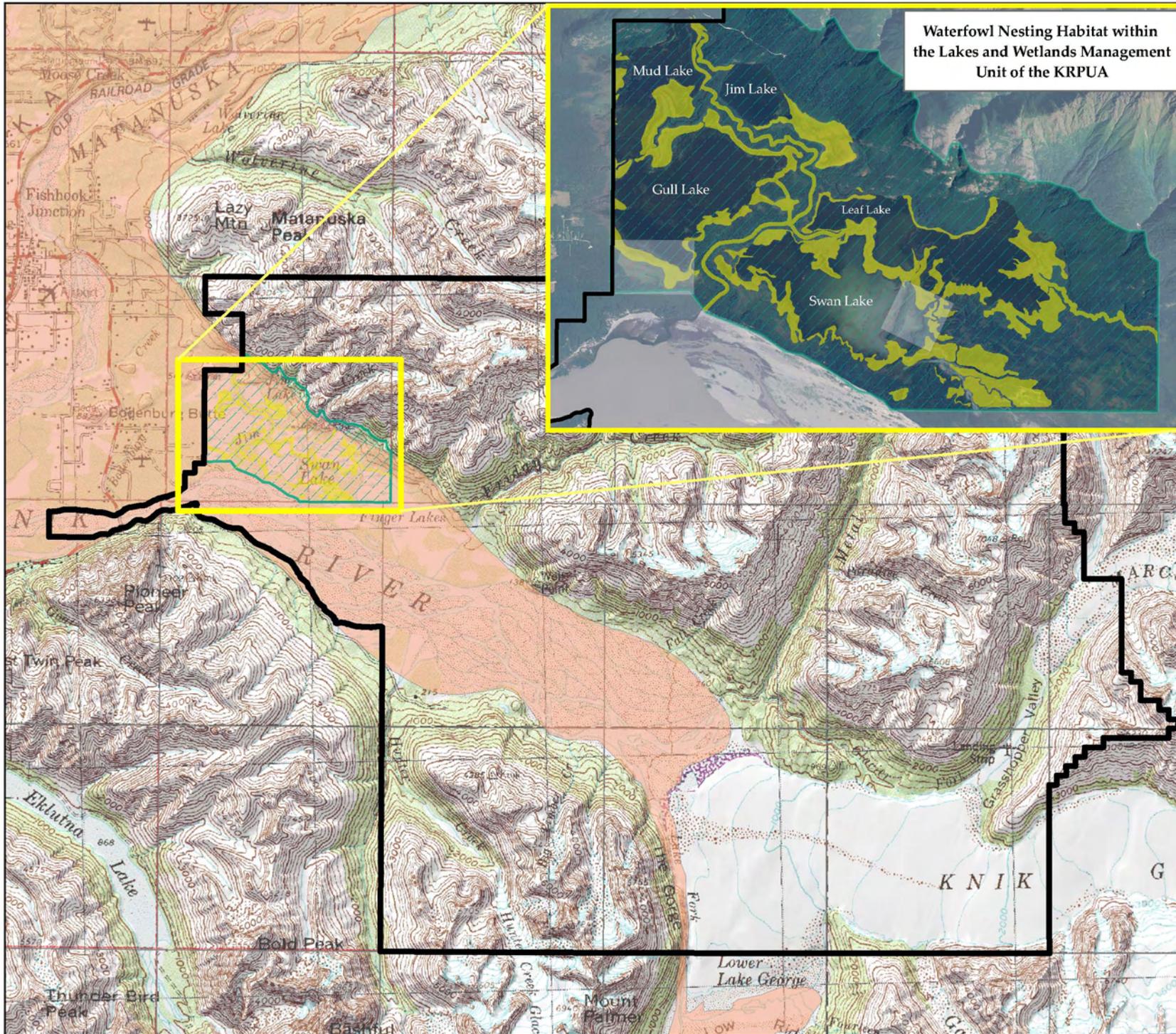


# Knik River Public Use Area

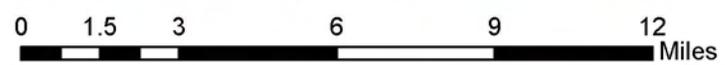
(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

## Waterfowl Habitat Map B-2

-  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



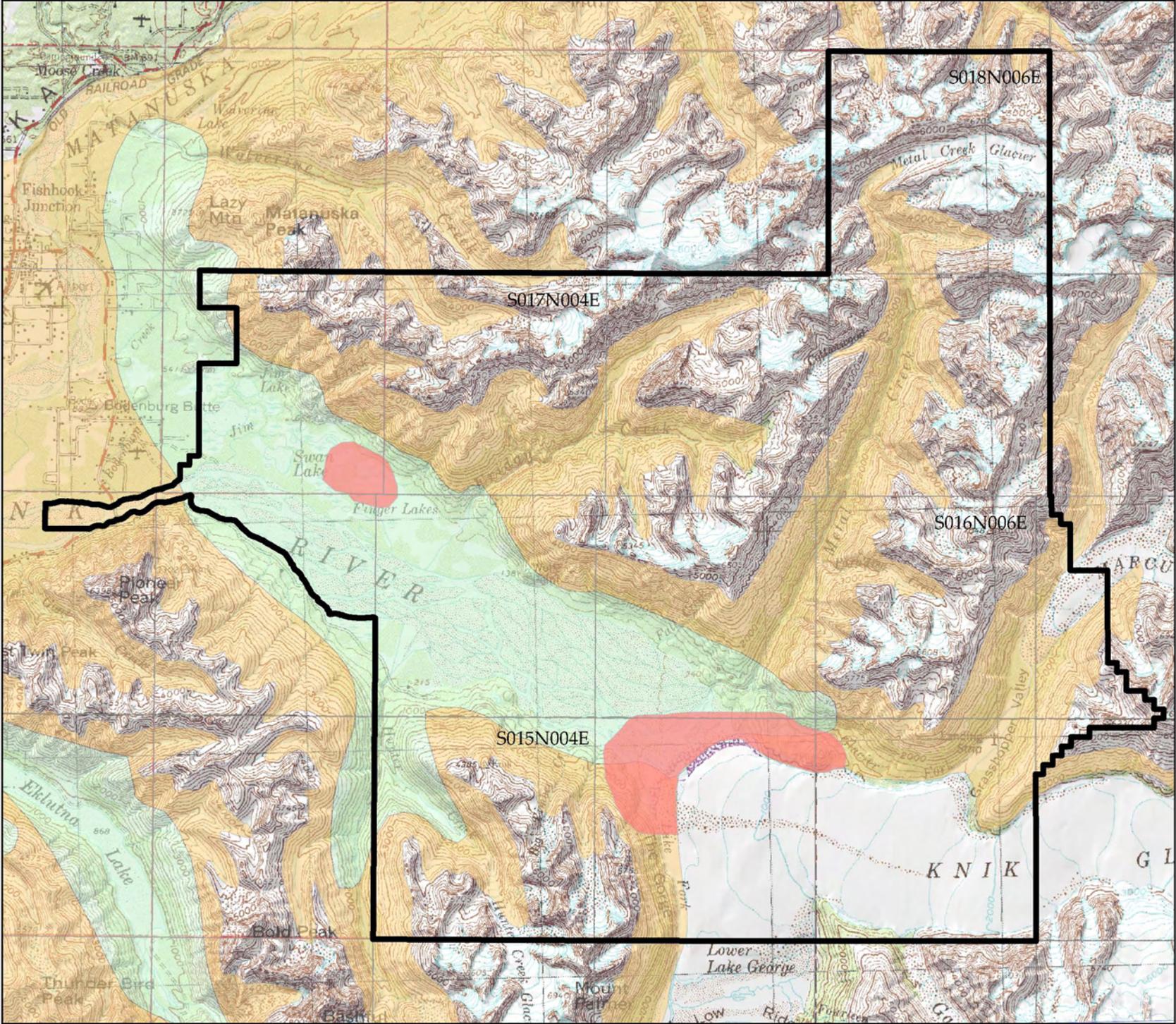
# Knik River Public Use Area

(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

## Moose Habitat

### Map B-3

-  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

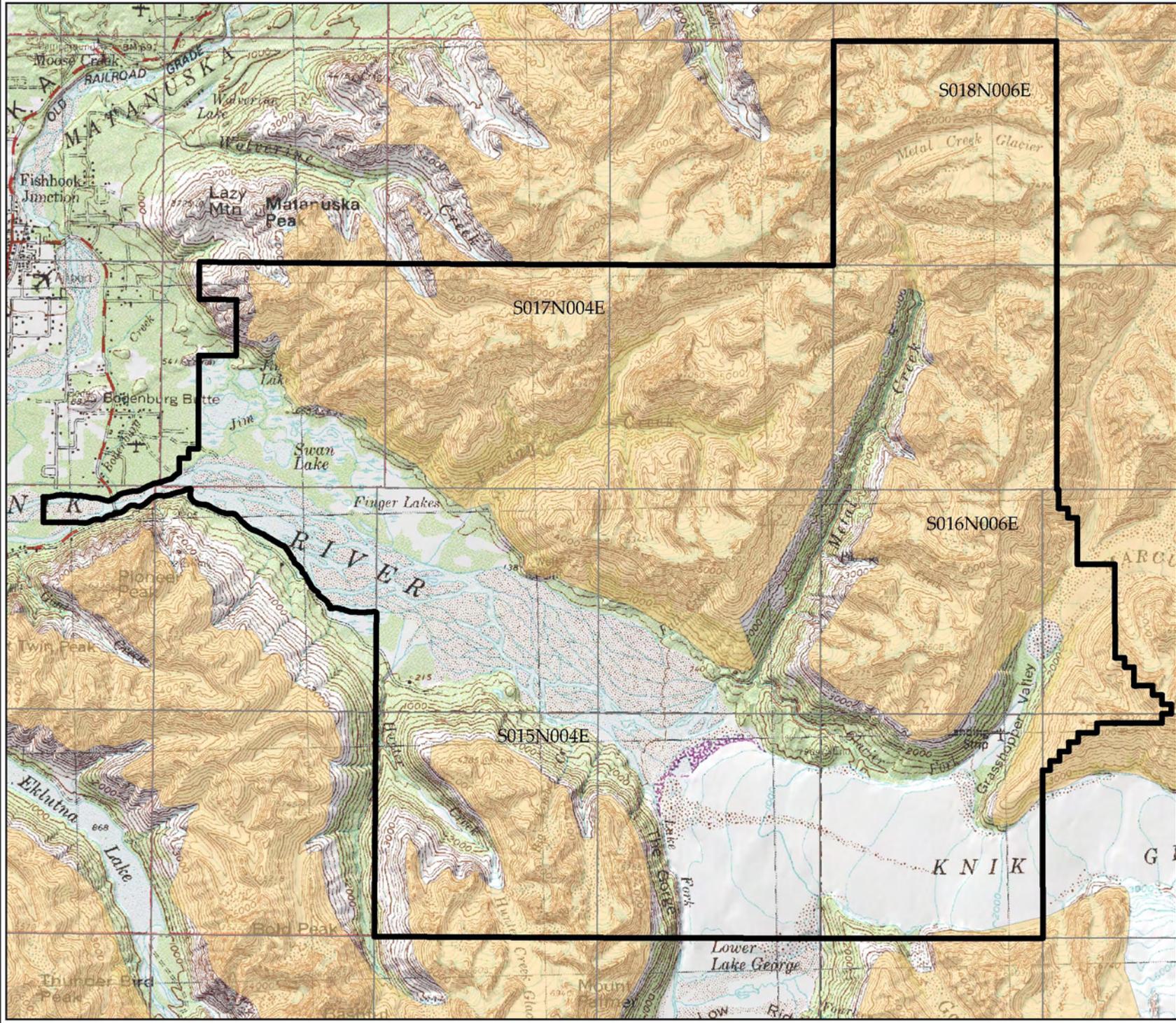


# Knik River Public Use Area

(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

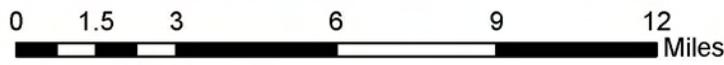
## Dall Sheep Habitat Map B-4

 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



1 **Appendix C: Proposed Regulations**

2 **Proposed Regulations**

3

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

8

9 Phase one regulations are in draft form and recently distributed for public review and  
 10 comment. The comments from this process are under review by DNR; see *proposed Phase 1*  
 11 *Regulations* for detail. It is intended that, following the public review process, they will be  
 12 adopted by the DNR Commissioner and will then be submitted to the Lieutenant Governor  
 13 for final review and adoption during 2008.

14

15 To provide the public a general understanding of what these regulations are and what issues  
 16 they intend to deal with and resolve, the Phase 1 regulations are summarized below. They  
 17 address key issues of public concern that were identified early in the public process.

18

19 DNR will consider additional regulations to address other significant issues that have evolved  
 20 out of this planning process. These regulations are provided in the section that follows,  
 21 ‘Phase 2 Regulations’, pp. C - 7.

22

23

24 **Table C-1: Phase 1 Regulations (Proposed)**

ISSUE	OBJECTIVE	PROPOSED REGULATIONS
A large parcel of state land that contains several heavily used access routes into the PUA was not included within the legal boundary of the PUA. Functionally, this land is and should be managed as part of the PUA.	Manage parcel of state land adjacent to PUA consistent with the KRPUA Management Plan.	Designate state lands within Section 31, T17N, R3E as a Special Use Area to be managed consistent with adjacent unit within PUA.

<b>ISSUE</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>PROPOSED REGULATIONS</b>
<p>Vehicle abandonment is an issue to management in a number of ways. One, these vehicles become an attractive nuisance to individuals who vandalize them, including burning them in many cases. Second, they may become sources of hazardous materials deposition on state land. Finally, there are significant re-occurring costs associated with removal and disposal of abandoned vehicles.</p>	<p>Eliminate abandonment of vehicles.</p>	<p>Prohibit vehicle abandonment.</p>
<p>The issues associated with non-functional vehicles are the same as vehicle abandonment above.</p>	<p>Eliminate transportation of non-functioning vehicles.</p>	<p>Prohibit transportation of non-functioning vehicles.</p>
<p>Operation of vehicles in excess of 10,000 pounds curb weight without Department authorization has resulted in an unacceptable level of impacts to soils and vegetation.</p>	<p>Include stipulations necessary to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts to fish and wildlife and their habitat since the operation of these vehicles adversely affects these components.</p>	<p>Prohibit operation of vehicles in excess of 10,000 lbs curb weight without Department authorization.</p>
<p>Unplanned proliferation of trails in vegetated areas has resulted in impacts to sensitive habitats, wetlands, and other resources of the state.</p>	<p>Recognize existing trails and the access they provide while eliminating unplanned trail development in vegetated areas.</p>	<p>Prohibit new trail development in vegetated areas without authorization from the Department.</p>
<p>Widespread recreational use highway and off-highway vehicles has resulted in disturbance of the vegetative mat in some areas.</p>	<p>Eliminate significant disturbances to the vegetative mat while maintaining and enhancing recreational use in areas that have been determined to be appropriate for continued OHV and highway vehicle use.</p>	<p>Prohibit significant disturbances of the vegetative mat in all vegetated areas, consistent with the requirements of Generally Allowed Uses.</p>

<b>ISSUE</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>PROPOSED REGULATIONS</b>
Large open fires within or adjacent to forested areas increases the potential for wildfires adjacent to population centers.	Reduce potential for wildfire in forested areas, especially those areas that adjoin residential areas.	Prohibit large open fires in forested areas.
Burning of non-native materials such as construction debris, wooden pallets, vehicles, household refuse, and other items has resulted in the deposition of materials that may be hazardous to recreational user or their animals (screws, nails, metal scraps, etc.) and may be hazardous to the environment.	Improve safety to recreational users and animals through elimination of potentially hazardous materials and litter associated with burning non-native materials.	Prohibit burning non-native materials including construction debris, wooden pallets, vehicles, household refuse, etc.
Discarded waste and litter is a chronic nuisance. In some cases litter and waste may be hazardous material. DNR, borough and local community members have endeavored to remove waste and litter.	Eliminate littering and continue to support the efforts of local groups in their activities to eliminate the accumulation of waste and litter within the PUA.	Prohibit littering and deposition of waste, as defined in Alaska Administrative Code 18AAC 62.010-.020.
Hazardous materials deposition has occurred. These materials include paints, automotive fluids, and components of electrical devices, in addition to other materials.	Eliminate deposition of hazardous waste.	Prohibit deposition of hazardous.
Some unauthorized structures have been erected. These unauthorized structures are illegal under state administrative code, have the effect of discouraging the legal use of state land, and often result in litter when/if they are abandoned.	Remove existing trespass structures and prohibit construction of new unauthorized structures.	Remove all unauthorized structures and prohibit construction of new unauthorized structures.

<b>ISSUE</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>PROPOSED REGULATIONS</b>
Some individuals are collecting forest resources (i.e. mushrooms, conks, berries, etc.) for commercial purposes without DNR authorization. This activity is illegal unless authorized by DNR.	Allow reasonable commercial collection of forest resources.	DNR may issue authorizations for collection of forest resources for commercial purposes. Commercial collections without authorization will be prohibited.
Cutting of dead standing and live trees removes potential wildlife habitat.	Eliminate cutting of dead standing and live trees.	Prohibit cutting of dead standing and live trees.
Long term (greater than 14 days) private use camps on state land are required to be authorized by the Department. Camps in designated Public Use Sites cannot remain for longer than 7 days. Typically these private use camps are erected prior to or during a fishing or hunting season and are used primarily by the same occupants throughout the season. These camps may have the effect of discouraging use from portions of state land, and often result in litter when/if they are abandoned.	Allow private use camps determined appropriate by the DNR. Eliminate unauthorized long-term private use camps.	DNR may authorize long-term private use camps in areas where they will not negatively impact other recreational uses or significantly impact fish and wildlife or their habitat.

<b>ISSUE</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>PROPOSED REGULATIONS</b>
<p>Large gatherings of individuals may have positive or negative impacts on natural resources or recreational uses. Large groups have historically gathered to clean up litter, waste, abandoned cars, and other items, thus resulting in positive impacts for recreational uses and natural resources. Other large gatherings have resulted in negative impacts to the natural resources and recreational users. These negative impacts include unlawful and/or undesirable activities such as wrecking and burning of cars, large open fires in forested areas, burning of non-native materials or construction debris, and deposition of waste and litter.</p>	<p>Allow large gathers as determined appropriate by the Department. Eliminate large gatherings of individuals where this activity would result in illegal activities or littering. Utilize a management system that allows for the gathering of individuals, but under an authorization process.</p>	<p>Require an authorization from the Department to hold a gathering of more than 50 people.</p>
<p>Use of various objects or items as targets has resulted in widespread deposition of waste and litter. Some items used as targets may be result in the accumulation of hazardous materials.</p>	<p>Eliminate shooting of items or materials that result in negative impacts such as hazardous waste or litter, or can create unsafe or dangerous conditions.</p>	<p>Prohibit shooting items or materials that would result in hazardous waste or litter, or would create unsafe or dangerous conditions. Targets should be restricted to paper, wood, or other commercial product(s) made for target practice. Legal hunting will not be affected by regulations proposed by DNR.</p>

<b>ISSUE</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>PROPOSED REGULATIONS</b>
Discharge of fireworks and explosives increases the potential for wildfires on state and adjacent MSB lands.	Reduce potential for wildfires caused by fireworks and increase public safety through the prohibition commercial fireworks and home-made explosive devices.	Prohibit discharge of fireworks and explosives without authorization from the Department.
Discharge of firearms in areas with moderate to high levels of recreation and in areas adjacent to population centers or private residences threatens public safety.	Provide for the safety of the recreating public, and those individuals that live in close proximity to the PUA.	Restrict recreational discharge of weapons in locations where high densities of trails exist and/or where moderate to high levels of people recreate. The Department may consider additional restrictions in the future that are necessary to protect public safety. DNR will recommend two areas for recreational shooting within the PUA. This prohibition would not affect legal hunting.
Harassment of fish and wildlife usually results in significant adverse impacts. Some species are extremely sensitive or vulnerable to impacts at critical life stages.	Reduce impacts associated with the harassment of fish and wildlife species.	Intentionally harassing fish and wildlife species will be prohibited.
Many signs or other structures developed or placed by the state or borough have been vandalized by some users of adjacent lands. Destruction of public property results in increased replacement and management costs.	Eliminate vandalism of public property.	Vandalism and destruction of private property will be prohibited. (Note: in addition to regulatory prohibitions, the Department will attempt to reduce vandalism through educational and enforcement programs.)

1 **Table C-2: Phase 2 Regulations**

2 Phase two regulations are those regulations that are necessary to implement the plan. These  
 3 draft regulations directly result from management guidelines contained in the KRPUA  
 4 Management Plan. The following table provides an issue statement; DNR objective for  
 5 proposing the regulation; and the proposed regulation. Following the adoption of the plan,  
 6 these regulations will be proposed through the regulation process and will go through an  
 7 additional public review process before they are adopted.

8  
 9

<b>ISSUE</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>PROPOSED REGULATIONS</b>
<p>Few non-motorized experiences are available in the PUA at this time. Much of the area that is easily accessible (including the Rippy Trail) has had some level of motorized activity and use.</p>	<p>Provide an area for non-motorized recreational uses.</p>	<p>Restrict motorized use in an area around the existing Rippy Trail. The area is generally described as being bounded by Jim Lake parking area to the west; upper Jim Creek to the east; the one thousand foot contour line to the north; and, the wetland boundary on the south. This action is being taken to enhance non-motorized recreational opportunities within the KRPUA. (Note: the specific nature of this regulation may change based upon the results of the public review process and the final decision of the DNR Commissioner on the Rippy non-motorized area.)</p>
<p>Use is likely to increase in the PUA, particularly within the uplands adjacent to major access points and the unvegetated shorelands of the Knik River. Impacts associated with use have minimal and an acceptable level of impact on these areas.</p>	<p>Allow for current use levels and anticipated future use levels, and associated impacts of those uses, within an identified area of the PUA.</p>	<p>Amend regulations to allow rutting and ground disturbance in excess of 6 inches for the area depicted on Map 2-3, pp. 2 -35.</p>

<b>ISSUE</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>PROPOSED REGULATIONS</b>
Many individuals go to the PUA to shoot firearms recreationally. Because of the numerous trails in the area where shooting primarily occurs, and high number of recreational users, some shooting is not conducted in a safe manner.	Provide areas where recreational shooting can occur while providing for the safety of recreational users.	DNR will designate shooting area(s) at the location of the existing area on Maud Road extension and/or on state land adjacent to the Pavilion Parking area.
The majority of use on Jim Lake is by non-motorized boats or by boats with motors 5hp or less. Use of large, high-horsepower boats has rarely occurred on this small waterbody and associated wetlands. Prohibiting use of motors over 5hp will preserve the current use patterns and enhance the current recreational experience.	Maintain current recreational uses on Jim Lake and associated wetlands.	Prohibit operation of boats with motors greater than 5hp on Jim Lake and the associated wetlands.
A portion of McRoberts Creek receives increased use from non-motorized boaters. This section of the creek has narrow channels and a limited sight distance. The safety of non-motorized users on this segment of McRoberts Creek has been identified as a safety concern.	Allow existing uses to continue on McRoberts Creek while ensuring the safety of non-motorized users on that portion of the creek where safety concerns exist.	Restrict speed of motorized boats on McRoberts Creek from the portage at Jim Lake to the confluence of McRoberts and Jim creeks.
Manmade Lake provides family orientated camping and swimming opportunities. Motorized use occurs sporadically on this small waterbody and is a safety concern.	Maintain family orientated camping and swimming opportunities. Ensure that these activities can occur in a safe environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prohibit motorized use on Manmade Lake from May 1 to September 30.</li> <li>• Restrict motorized vehicle speed to not more than 10 mph within 100 feet of Manmade Lake.</li> </ul>

<b>ISSUE</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>PROPOSED REGULATIONS</b>
<p>High value/high use campsites or areas exist within the PUA. Restrictions on the length of stay in these areas will provide an opportunity for a greater number of people to camp in these areas.</p>	<p>Increase camping opportunities at high value/high use sites or locations.</p>	<p>Limit the length of stay for individuals camping within public use sites.</p>
<p>Recreational discharge of firearms within high value/high use sites or areas presents a threat to public safety.</p>	<p>Prohibit recreational discharge of firearms at high value/high use sites where shooting firearms is a threat to public safety.</p>	<p>Prohibit recreational discharge of firearms at public use sites. This prohibition would not affect legal hunting.</p>

1  
2

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

## 2 **Knik River Public Use Area** 3 **Draft Trails Management Process**

### 4 5 6 **Introduction**

7  
8 OHV use related to recreation, hunting and fishing has increased significantly in the Knik  
9 River Valley in recent years. As a result, numerous trails have been created and areas that  
10 previously received little or no motorized use are now seeing frequent use. Some of these  
11 trails have been developed in sensitive fish and wildlife habitat areas. Others have been  
12 developed in wetlands, where repeated use results in degradation of the soil and development  
13 of multiple routes. DNR seeks to address trails impacts to wetlands and sensitive habitat  
14 through a comprehensive Trails Management Process (TMP).  
15

### 16 17 **Trails Management Process**

18  
19 The TMP will address existing and newly developed trails in the Knik River Public Use Area  
20 (PUA). The TMP will provide an inventory of all trails to be managed by DNR, and provide  
21 an assessment of trail conditions and their impacts to fish and wildlife habitat. The  
22 assessment will identify trails that have significant impacts on fish and wildlife habitat,  
23 particularly waterfowl nesting areas, trumpeter swan or loon nesting areas, moose calving  
24 concentration areas, and fish spawning areas. Trails in wetland areas will be assessed to  
25 determine if they are having significant impacts on soils and hydrology. Trails impacting  
26 other state resources will also be assessed.  
27

28 Based on those assessments, existing trails determined to have significant negative impacts  
29 on fish and wildlife habitat, or other state resources, may be closed, be re-routed, or face  
30 seasonal restrictions. These actions are consistent with the statutory mandate to protect fish  
31 and wildlife habitat so traditional use of the fish and wildlife populations can continue.  
32

33 Through the TMP, DNR will identify potential new trails (non-motorized and motorized) for  
34 development. DNR may also identify existing trails that can be developed to a higher  
35 standard or expanded. Trails may also be identified for reservation as public easements for  
36 specific purposes. These actions are consistent with the statutory mandates to maintain and  
37 enhance recreation and to provide for a full spectrum of recreational opportunities.  
38

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

7  
8 DNR may accept and adjudicate applications to re-route, designate, develop, or expand trails.  
9 DNR may reserve limited use easements on trails developed consistent with Department  
10 authorizations.

11  
12 All new trails authorized by the Department will be reserved through public easements, and  
13 be developed as sustainable trails. Sustainable trails are capable of handling the intended use  
14 without serious environmental degradation. By following landscape contours, utilizing  
15 terrain features, and shedding water, sustainable trails require minimal maintenance over the  
16 long term.

17  
18 The foundation of trail sustainability focuses on initial trail design to maximize the resilience  
19 of the trail to use-related impacts, minimize resource degradation, and maximize user  
20 enjoyment. While initial construction costs may be more for sustainable trails because the  
21 tread length is often longer to meet controlled grade limits, reduced future maintenance costs  
22 should compensate for those initial investments. Integral to sustainability is a sound trail  
23 plan to meet user needs and desires within the trail location environment. This planning is  
24 the core for any successful trail project.

## 25 26 27 **Trails Management Process Policy**

### 28 29 **Intent**

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

- 34  
35 1. Maintaining and enhancing opportunities for the recreating public.
- 36 2. Manage use through proper planning, design and construction of trails.
- 37 3. Ensure long-term savings in maintenance costs.
- 38 4. Demonstrate that DNR is committed to managing uses, and the associated impacts, so  
39 future generations are able to enjoy the resources of the PUA.
- 40

**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 US 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 US 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 US 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.

1 **Table D-1: Trail Management Classes**

<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>

1  
2  
3

# 1 Appendix E: Special Use Area Designation

2 STATE OF ALASKA  
3 DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
4 DIVISION OF MINING LAND, AND WATER

5  
6 AMENDED  
7 KNIK RIVER SPECIAL USE AREA  
8 (ADL 230206)  
9

10  
11 The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is establishing a Special Use Area (SUA) to  
12 regulate certain activities on four parcels of state land totaling 504 acres. The first parcel is  
13 252 acres of state land within the W½ of section 31, T 17N, R 3E, Seward Meridian. The  
14 second parcel is 165 acres of land in the E1/2 of section 36, T 17N, R2E, Seward Meridian.  
15 The Third parcel is 78 acres of land in the N½ of section 1, T 16N, R2E, Seward Meridian.  
16 The fourth parcel is 9 acres of land in the NE¼ of section 2, T16N, R2E, Seward Meridian.  
17 These lands are depicted on the accompanying map titled *Proposed Knik River Special Use*  
18 *Areas*. These lands are hereinafter, referred to as Knik River Special Use Area (KRSUA).  
19 They are adjacent to the boundary of the Knik River Public Use Area (PUA) created under  
20 AS 41.23.180-230. This SUA creates this area and restricts specific uses on state lands and  
21 waters within the designated area.  
22  
23

## 24 Legal Description

25  
26 All interests in the uplands in Seward Meridian, Township 17 North, Range 3 East, Section  
27 31, W1/2  
28  
29

## 30 Authority

31  
32 AS 38.05.020  
33  
34

## 35 Background

36  
37 These parcels have been identified for designation as a special use area once they are  
38 acquired by the state. The identified parcels are functionally part of the PUA and receive  
39 high use levels and impacts associated with use of the PUA. A management plan and

1 regulations are currently in the process of being developed for the PUA, these regulations  
2 manage uses and activities in the PUA and are also applicable to the KRSUA, except for  
3 enforcement, which can only occur in the PUA.  
4

5 The accompanying map illustrates the four parcels that will be included in the KRSUA.  
6  
7

## 8 **Purpose**

9

10 A SUA is a designation placed on certain land identified as having special resource values(s)  
11 needing protection. The result of this designation is to restrict specific activities that would  
12 otherwise be considered “generally allowed” under 11 AAC 96.020.  
13

14 These lands are being designated as a SUA because they currently receive high levels of use  
15 related to the PUA, have several main access routes into the PUA, and receive high levels of  
16 impacts related to use of the PUA. The identified lands are located adjacent to the boundary  
17 of the PUA, and are functionally a part of the PUA. It is the intent of this SUA to manage  
18 these lands in conjunction with the adjacent Knik River Public Use Area Management Plan  
19 to insure comprehensive management of the lands affected by recreational use in the Knik  
20 River Valley.  
21  
22

## 23 **Restricted Uses and Activities**

24

25 The restrictions detailed in *11AAC 96.015 (d)* and regulations developed subsequent to the  
26 Knik River Public Use Area Management Plan shall also apply to those lands described in  
27 the KRSUA.  
28  
29

## 30 **Decision**

31

32 I find these actions to be consistent with the Department of Natural Resources management  
33 authority, the management intent of the PUA, the Knik River Public Use Area Management  
34 Plan, and with the draft regulations intended to manage the PUA. These actions are in the  
35 overall best interest of the State.  
36  
37  
38  
39

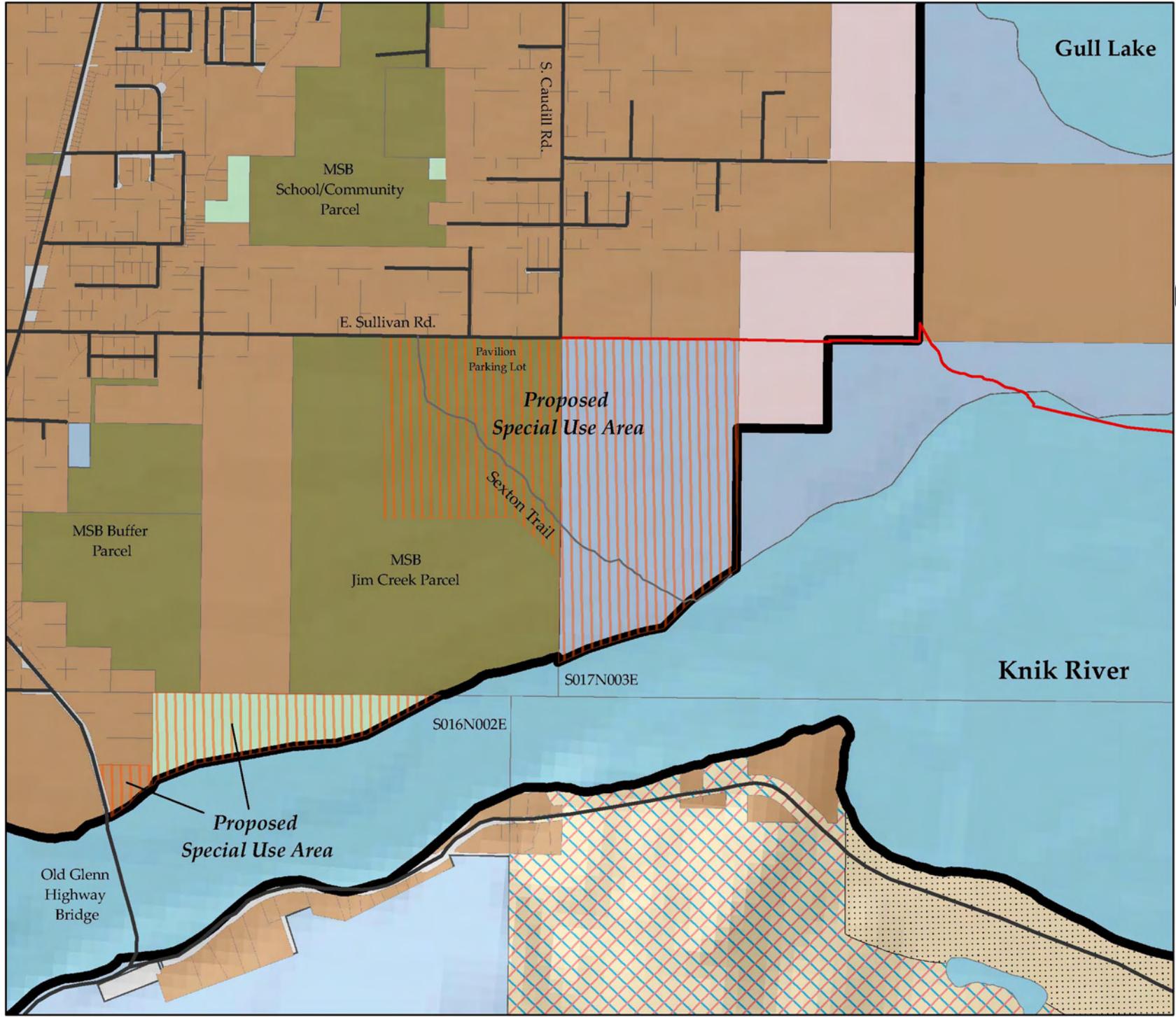
40 \_\_\_\_\_  
41 Director  
42 Division of Mining, Land and Water  
43 Department of Natural Resources  
44 State of Alaska

# Knik River Public Use Area

(AS 41.23.180 - 41.23.230)

## Proposed Knik River Special Use Areas

### Map E-1

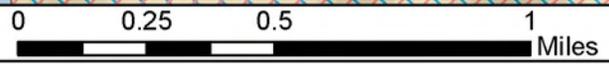


- KRPUA Legal Boundary
- State Upland
- Proposed SUA Lands
- State Tide, Shore and Submerged Land
- State Selected Land
- Federal Land
- PLO 3324
- Native Land
- Native Selected Land
- Borough Land
- Mental Health Trust Land
- Private Land
- Major Roads
- RS 2477
- Trails



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



## 1 **Appendix F: Plan Amendments**

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

5  
6  
7 **STATE OF ALASKA**  
8 **DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**  
9 **DIVISION OF MINING, LAND AND WATER**

10  
11 **DRAFT**  
12 **Susitna Area Plan Amendment**  
13 **for**  
14 **Knik River Public Use Area**  
15 **(LCO SC-07-002)**  
16

### 17 **Background**

18  
19 The Susitna Area Plan (SAP) was adopted in June 1985 and has guided the management of  
20 State land throughout much of the Susitna and Matanuska Valleys, including portions of the  
21 Knik River area, since that time. In 2006 the Knik River Public Use Area (PUA),  
22 encompassing approximately 148,895 acres of State land, was established as a Legislative  
23 Designated Area under AS 41.23.180-230. This legislation required the preparation of a  
24 management plan by the DNR Commissioner, the intent of which is to provide a detailed  
25 management strategy for State land within the PUA.  
26

27 The boundary of the PUA overlaps portions of the Glenn Highway Subregion (Units 2e, 3b,  
28 3c) and the Chugach Subregion (Units 1a, and 1d) of the SAP. Because the PUA provides a  
29 more detailed approach to state land management in this area and because the legislature  
30 intended for the PUA to guide state land and resource management in this area, it is  
31 appropriate to amend the SAP. The PUA management plan will function as a state land use  
32 plan in this area as well as provide an overall management approach to the use and  
33 management of State land. That is, the Knik River Public Use Area Management Plan (Plan)  
34 is to provide both the area management policies and management guidelines that are  
35 typically contained in Chapter 2 of such plans and the plan designations and management  
36 intent statements that are characteristic of Chapter 3.  
37

38 In addition to this amendment, portions of the Prince William Sound Area Plan (PWSAP)  
39 overlap with the boundary of the PUA. The PWSAP will be amended concurrently with this  
40 Plan Amendment.  
41

1 This amendment does not affect Leasehold Location Orders or Mineral Orders in place  
2 before the enactment of the PUA. Land Classification Order SC-07-002 accompanies this  
3 Amendment, reclassifying the entirety of the PUA area to the co-designation of Public  
4 Recreation Land and Wildlife Habitat Land.  
5

### 6 **Current Plan Requirements**

7 Within the SAP the Glenn Highway and Chugach Subregions are currently designated Public  
8 Recreation and Wildlife Habitat. The SAP management intent recommends that these areas  
9 be managed to protect and improve public recreation opportunities while protecting the  
10 general quality of fish, waterfowl and wildlife habitat. A portion of the affected areas is  
11 recommended for legislative designation as state recreation area.  
12

### 13 **Proposed Amendment**

14 The boundary of the SAP is amended to exclude those lands that are within the SAP (Glenn  
15 Highway Subregion, Units 2e, 3b, 3c and Chugach Subregion, Units 1a, and 1d) that coincide  
16 with lands in the PUA. The lands within these townships are now part of the PUA. Where  
17 the Plan overlaps the SAP (Glenn Highway Subregion, Units 2e, 3b, 3c and Chugach  
18 Subregion, Units 1a, and 1d), this amendment rescinds all current SAP land use plan  
19 requirements and recommendations, and functions as the land use plan under AS 38.04.065  
20 for this area.  
21

22 The management intent, plan designations, and management guidelines for these lands is  
23 described in detail within the Plan; this management plan shall function as the management  
24 strategy for these lands.  
25

26 LCO SC-07-002 classifies land within the PUA as Public Recreation and Wildlife Habitat.  
27 Reclassification is necessary since this Plan will function as a state land use plan as well as  
28 the management plan. This LCO is based upon the plan designations contained in the Plan,  
29 which co-designates state land as Public Recreation-Dispersed and Habitat.  
30

### 31 **Alternatives Considered**

32 Two alternatives were considered in the drafting of this amendment:  
33

- 34 A. Null Alternative – status quo. The SAP would continue to be used as the guiding  
35 management document for the PUA.
- 36 B. Amendment of SAP as outlined by this plan amendment. This alternative will  
37 provide more detailed management guidance to the Department in decisions for the  
38 PUA.  
39

### 40 **Recommendation**

41 Alternative B is the preferred course of action. The amendment to the SAP is necessary to  
42 clarify and direct the specific management of PUA lands. Alternative A has been given due  
43 consideration and has been determined not to provide the necessary management directions  
44 necessary for the PUA under AS 41.23.230.  
45

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

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

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

7  
 8 *Evaluation of physical, economic, and social factors:* A thorough evaluation of these  
 9 factors has taken place as a primary aspect of the development of the PUA plan and this  
 10 amendment.

11  
 12 *Planning and Classification for Settlement:* Settlement has been determined to not be  
 13 compatible with AS 41.23.230. Settlement of any portion of the PUA would create potential  
 14 conflicts of surface uses and goes against the legislative directives.

15  
 16 *Land Inventory:* A land inventory was prepared as part of this plan amendment and as  
 17 part of the PUA. Land Status maps as well as accompanying land statistics can be found in  
 18 the Knik River Public Use Area Management Plan.

19  
 20 *Alternative Present and Future Uses:* These uses were considered as part of the directive  
 21 in AS 41.23.230. This area has been designated as a public use area by the legislature.

22  
 23 *Adjacent non-state lands:* The adjacent lands include private, borough, federal, and  
 24 native lands. All of the adjacent land uses have been considered and deemed compatible and  
 25 all adjacent land owners have been invited to participate in the planning process.

26  
 27 *Potential Conflicts between mining and surface uses:* Several recreational mining claims  
 28 are within the PUA. These uses are compatible with, and will not be excluded by, the  
 29 management plan. After analysis of the minerals and mineral potential in the area, and  
 30 discussion with DNR Mining Section, it has been determined that there is no commercial  
 31 potential for mining within this area. There are no foreseen conflicts of uses in this regard.

32  
 33 *Public Participation:* the public is being given several opportunities to comment on this  
 34 proposal in conjunction with the proposed PUA management plan.

35  
 36 **Authority to Proceed**

37 Authority to proceed to public notice is appropriate and is authorized.

38  
 39  
 40 \_\_\_\_\_  
 41 Section Chief,  
 42 Resource Assessment and Development Section  
 43 Division of Mining Land and Water  
 44 Department of Natural Resources  
 45 State of Alaska

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

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

**DRAFT  
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.

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

4  
5 SC-07-002 classifies land within the PUA as Public Recreation and Wildlife Habitat.  
6 Reclassification is necessary since this Plan will function as a state land use plan as well as  
7 the management plan. This LCO is based upon the plan designations contained in the PUA,  
8 which co-designates state land as Public Recreation-Dispersed and Habitat.

### 9 10 **Alternatives Considered**

11 Two alternatives were considered in the drafting of this amendment:

- 12  
13 A. Null Alternative – status quo. The PWSP would continue to be used as the guiding  
14 management document for the three townships that now are within the PUA.  
15 B. Amendment of the PWSP boundary as outlined by this plan amendment. This  
16 alternative will provide more detailed management guidance to the Department in  
17 decisions for the PUA.  
18

### 19 **Recommendation**

20 Alternative B is the preferred course of action. The amendment to the PWSP boundary is  
21 necessary to clarify and direct the specific management of PUA lands. Alternative A has  
22 been given due consideration and has been determined not to provide the management  
23 directions necessary for the PUA under AS 41.23.230.  
24

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

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

28 *Multiple Use and Sustained Yield:* Multiple Use and sustained yield, as stipulated in AS  
29 41.23.230, has been given due consideration in this amendment. A detailed analysis can be  
30 found in the main body of the PUA plan.  
31

32 *Evaluation of physical, economic, and social factors:* A thorough evaluation of these  
33 factors has taken place as a primary aspect of the development of the PUA plan and this  
34 amendment.  
35

36 *Planning and Classification for Settlement:* Settlement has been determined to not be  
37 compatible with AS 41.23.230. Settlement of any portion of the PUA would create potential  
38 conflicts of surface uses and goes against the legislative directives.  
39

40 *Land Inventory:* A land inventory was prepared as part of this plan amendment and as  
41 part of the PUA. Land Status maps as well as accompanying land statistics can be found in  
42 the appendix of the PUA plan.  
43

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

1        *Adjacent non-state lands:* The adjacent lands include private, borough, federal, and  
2 native lands. All of the adjacent land uses have been considered and deemed compatible and  
3 all adjacent land owners have been invited to participate in the planning process.  
4

5        *Potential Conflicts between mining and surface uses:* Several recreational mining claims  
6 are within the PUA. These uses are compatible with, and will not be excluded by, the  
7 management plan. After analysis of the minerals and mineral potential in the area, and  
8 discussion with DNR Mining Section, it has been determined that there is no commercial  
9 potential for mining within this area. There are no foreseen conflicts of uses in this regard.  
10

11        *Public Participation:* the public is being given several opportunities to comment on this  
12 proposal in conjunction with the proposed PUA management plan.  
13

14        **Authority to Proceed**

15        Authority to proceed to public notice is appropriate and is authorized.  
16  
17  
18  
19

20 \_\_\_\_\_  
21 Section Chief,  
22 Resource Assessment and Development Section  
23 Division of Mining Land and Water  
24 Department of Natural Resources  
25 State of Alaska  
26

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

# Appendix G: Land Classification Order

**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 \_\_\_\_\_:

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 ( ) Revised ( x ) Dated 1985.

Management Plan: Knik PUA Management Plan

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

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		Public Recreation Habitat and Harvest Resource Management	Public Recreation Wildlife Habitat

- 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 superseded by this LCO. Nothing shall prevent the reclassification of these lands if warranted in the public interest.

Classified: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tom Irwin, Commissioner, Department of Natural Resources

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

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

2 The Public Trust Doctrine provides that public trust lands, waters and living resources in a state  
3 are held by the state in trust for the benefit of all the people, and establishes the right of the  
4 public to fully utilize the public trust lands, waters, and resources for a wide variety of public  
5 uses. Each state has the authority and responsibility for managing these public trust assets to  
6 assure the public rights are upheld.

7  
8 The Public Trust Doctrine applies whenever navigable waters or the lands beneath those waters  
9 are altered, developed, conveyed, or otherwise managed. It also applies whether the trust lands  
10 are publicly or privately owned. Public trust lands are generally those lands below navigable  
11 waters, with the upper boundary being the ordinary high water mark. Tidelands, shore lands of  
12 navigable lakes and rivers, as well as the land beneath oceans, lakes and rivers are usually  
13 considered public trust lands.

14  
15 The Alaska Constitution contains numerous provisions embracing principles of the Public  
16 Trust Doctrine that require the state to exercise authority to ensure that the right of the public to  
17 use navigable waters for navigation, commerce, recreation, and related purposes is protected.  
18 In Alaska, the Public Trust Doctrine extends beyond those submerged lands in which the state  
19 holds title to include all waters that are navigable. The state's waters are themselves reserved  
20 to the people for common use.

21  
22 The Alaska Constitution (Article VIII, sections 1, 2, 3, 6, 13, and 14) and Alaska Statutes  
23 (38.05.127 and 38.05.128) contain some of the provisions, which are the legal basis for  
24 applying the Public Trust Doctrine in Alaska. In Alaska, this doctrine guarantees the public's  
25 right to engage in activities such as commerce, navigation, fishing, hunting, trapping, and  
26 swimming, while also providing for the protection of areas for ecological study.

27  
28 The Alaska Constitution provides that "free access to the navigable or public waters of the  
29 state, as defined by the legislature, shall not be denied any citizen of the United States or  
30 resident of the state, except that the legislature may by general law regulate and limit such  
31 access for other beneficial uses or public purposes." The Alaska Supreme Court has concluded  
32 "the provisions in Article VIII [of the Constitution] were intended to permit the broadest  
33 possible access to and use of state waters by the general public." *Wernberg v. State*, 516 P. 2d  
34 1191, 1198-9 (Alaska 1973). The Alaska legislature has broadly defined the navigable and  
35 public waters available for public use in AS 38.05.965. Moreover, the legislature has endorsed  
36 a broad interpretation of the Public Trust Doctrine constitutionalized in Article VIII in finding  
37 that:

38

- 1 • “Ownership of land bordering navigable or public waters does not grant an exclusive  
2 right to the use of the water and any rights of title to the land below the ordinary high  
3 water mark are subject to the rights of the people of the state to use and have access to  
4 the water for recreational purposes or any other public purposes for which the water is  
5 used or capable of being used consistent with the public trust.” Sec. 1, Ch. 82, SLA  
6 1985.
- 7 • The legislature has also declared that the right to use state waters does not include the  
8 right to enter or trespass upon private lands. Nevertheless, with 99 percent of Alaska in  
9 public ownership at statehood, state laws providing that the transfer of land to private  
10 parties also provide for public access to navigable waters have had broad effect. For  
11 instance, AS 38.05.127 implements the state constitutional guarantee of access to  
12 navigable waters under Article VIII, Section 14. Under the statute, the Commissioner  
13 of the Alaska Department of Natural Resources must “provide for the specific  
14 easements or rights-of-way necessary to ensure free access to and along the body of  
15 water, unless the Commissioner finds that regulating or eliminating access is necessary  
16 for other beneficial uses or public purposes”. The State’s responsibilities to implement  
17 the Public Trust Doctrine are considered and used throughout this plan. Any  
18 management actions will be consistent with the Public Trust Doctrine as defined by the  
19 Alaska Constitution, statutes, court decisions, and public involvement.

20  
21 These statutes and concepts are considered and used throughout this plan. Any management  
22 actions will be consistent with the public trust doctrine as defined by the Alaska Constitution,  
23 statutes, court decisions, and public involvement.  
24

## 1 **Appendix I: Legislation**

2 Sec. 41.23.180. Purpose of [AS 41.23.180](#) - 41.23.230.

3

4 The purpose of [AS 41.23.180](#) - 41.23.230 is to establish the area described in [AS 41.23.230](#)  
5 as the Knik River Public Use Area. The Knik River Public Use Area is established to

6

7 (1) perpetuate and enhance

8

9 (A) general public recreation;

10

11 (B) public enjoyment of fish and wildlife;

12

13 (2) protect and maintain migratory waterfowl nesting areas; habitats for moose, Dall  
14 sheep, and brown bear; and other fish and wildlife habitat so that traditional public  
15 use of fish and wildlife populations may continue;

16

17 (3) provide an area for the public to enjoy the full spectrum of public uses, including  
18 maintenance and enhancement of off-road motorized vehicle and nonmotorized  
19 recreational opportunities;

20

21 (4) allow

22

23 (A) continued motorized access for miners and owners of private property in the Knik  
24 River Public Use Area; and

25

26 (B) additional public uses of the area determined by the commissioner to be  
27 compatible with this section.

28

29 Sec. 41.23.190. Management.

30

31 (a) The commissioner is responsible for the management of the land and mineral estate  
32 within the Knik River Public Use Area consistent with the purposes of [AS 41.23.180](#) .  
33 After adequate public hearings, the commissioner may designate incompatible uses  
34 and shall adopt and may revise a management plan for the Knik River Public Use  
35 Area. The management plan must include provisions for the enforcement of the plan  
36 and compliance with the requirements of the plan.

37

38 (b) The commissioner of fish and game, the Board of Fisheries, and the Board of Game  
39 are responsible for the management of fish and game resources and public use of fish  
40 and wildlife in the Knik River Public Use Area consistent with the purposes of  
41 [AS 41.23.180](#) .

1 (c) The Knik River Public Use Area may not be managed as a unit of the state park  
2 system.

3  
4 (d) The commissioner shall identify wetland areas within the Knik River Public Use Area  
5 and provide for the protection and use of the wetland areas in the management plan.  
6

7 Sec. 41.23.200. Incompatible uses.  
8

9 (a) Except as provided in this section, the commissioner may prohibit or restrict uses  
10 determined to be incompatible with the purposes of the Knik River Public Use Area  
11 under [AS 41.23.180](#) within the state-owned land and water described in [AS 41.23.230](#)  
12

13 (b) Nothing in [AS 41.23.180](#) - 41.23.230 prohibits the Department of Fish and Game  
14 from engaging in rehabilitation, enhancement, and development of fish and wildlife  
15 habitat within an area described in AS 41.23.230 that is consistent with the purposes  
16 stated in AS 41.23.180.  
17

18 (c) The commissioner may not restrict  
19

20 (1) lawful fishing, hunting, or trapping rights allowed under a regulation of the Board  
21 of Fisheries or the Board of Game in the Knik River Public Use Area; or  
22

23 (2) the use of weapons, including firearms, in the Knik River Public Use Area except  
24 in locations where the commissioner determines that the use of weapons  
25 constitutes a threat to public safety.  
26

27 (d) The commissioner shall  
28

29 (1) allow the Knik River Public Use Area to be used for activities that are compatible  
30 with the reasons for establishing the public use area in [AS 41.23.180](#) and include  
31 all-terrain vehicles, aircraft, watercraft, airboats, snowmobiling, horseback riding,  
32 hiking, bicycling, dog sledding, cross-country skiing, skijoring, camping, hunting,  
33 fishing, wildlife viewing, photography, and, where permitted, mineral exploration  
34 and mining; and  
35

36 (2) recognize the existing off-road motor vehicle trails and the access those trails  
37 provide to areas in the Knik River Public Use Area, make accommodations that  
38 will provide the shortest possible route to avoid critical habitat, conduct trail  
39 rehabilitation in a way that minimizes damage, maintain and enhance off-road  
40 motor vehicle options and opportunities in the Knik River Public Use Area, and  
41 provide for increased use of the public use area.  
42

43 (e) The commissioner of public safety and the commissioner of fish and game shall have  
44 necessary access for fish and game management, research, and enforcement purposes.  
45

1 Sec. 41.23.210. Enforcement authority.  
2

3 (a) In the Knik River Public Use Area described in [AS 41.23.230](#) , the following persons  
4 are peace officers of the state for the purpose of enforcing the provisions of [AS](#)  
5 [41.23.180](#) - 41.23.230 and regulations adopted under [AS 41.23.180](#) - 41.23.230:  
6

7 (1) an employee of the department or other person authorized by the commissioner;  
8

9 (2) a peace officer, as that term is defined in [AS 01.10.060](#) .  
10

11 (b) A person designated in (a) of this section may, when enforcing the provisions of [AS](#)  
12 [41.23.180](#) - 41.23.230 or a regulation adopted under [AS 41.23.180](#) - 41.23.230,  
13

14 (1) execute a warrant or other process issued by an officer or court of competent  
15 jurisdiction;  
16

17 (2) administer or take an oath, affirmation, or affidavit; and  
18

19 (3) arrest a person who violates a provision of [AS 41.23.180](#) - 41.23.230 or a  
20 regulation adopted under [AS 41.23.180](#) - 41.23.230.  
21

22 Sec. 41.23.220. Penalty.  
23

24 (a) A person who violates a provision of [AS 41.23.180](#) - 41.23.230 or a regulation  
25 adopted under [AS 41.23.180](#) - 41.23.230 is guilty of a violation as defined in [AS](#)  
26 [11.81.900](#) .  
27

28 (b) The supreme court shall establish by order or rule a schedule of bail amounts for  
29 violations under (a) of this section that allow the disposition of a citation without a  
30 court appearance.  
31

32 Sec. 41.23.230. Knik River Public Use Area.  
33

34 Subject to valid existing rights, state-owned land and water and the state land and water  
35 acquired in the future that lie within the boundaries described in this section are designated as  
36 the Knik River Public Use Area, are reserved for all uses compatible with their primary  
37 function as public use land, and are assigned to the department for control and management:  
38

39 (1) Township 15 North, Range 4 East, Seward Meridian;  
40

41 (2) Township 15 North, Range 5 East, Seward Meridian;  
42

43 (3) Township 15 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian;  
44

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

- 1 Section 3: NW1/4NW1/4
- 2
- 3 Section 4: N1/2NE1/4, N1/2NW1/4
- 4
- 5 Section 5: N1/2NE1/4, NW1/4
- 6
- 7 Section 6: SW1/4SE1/4, N1/2SE1/4, SW1/4, N1/2
- 8
- 9 Section 7: SW1/4NW1/4, N1/2NW1/4;
- 10
- 11 (5) Township 16 North, Range 2 East, Seward Meridian
- 12
- 13 Section 1: Portions located below the ordinary high water of Knik River
- 14
- 15 Section 2: Portions located below the ordinary high water of Knik River
- 16
- 17 Section 3: Portions located below the ordinary high water of Knik River;
- 18
- 19 (6) Township 16 North, Range 3 East, Seward Meridian
- 20
- 21 Sections 1 – 3
- 22
- 23 Section 4: Portions located below the ordinary high water of Knik River
- 24
- 25 Section 5: Portions located below the ordinary high water of Knik River
- 26
- 27 Section 6: Portions located below the ordinary high water of Knik River
- 28
- 29 Section 9: Portions located below the ordinary high water of Knik River
- 30
- 31 Section 10: Portions located below the ordinary high water of Knik River
- 32
- 33 Sections 11 – 13
- 34
- 35 Section 14: Portions located below the ordinary high water of Knik River
- 36
- 37 Section 23: Portions located below the ordinary high water of Knik River
- 38
- 39 Section 24: Portions located below the ordinary high water of Knik River;
- 40
- 41 (7) Township 16 North, Range 4 East, Seward Meridian;
- 42
- 43 (8) Township 16 North, Range 5 East, Seward Meridian;
- 44
- 45 (9) Township 16 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian;

- 1 (10) Township 16 North, Range 7 East, Seward Meridian
- 2
- 3 Section 6: NW1/4SE1/4, S1/2SE1/4, W1/2
- 4
- 5 Section 7
- 6
- 7 Sections 17 – 20
- 8
- 9 Section 28: NW1/4SW1/4, S1/2SW1/4
- 10
- 11 Sections 29 – 32
- 12
- 13 Section 33: S1/2NE1/4, SE1/4, W1/2
- 14
- 15 Section 34: SE1/4SW1/4, W1/2SW1/4;
- 16
- 17 (11) Township 17 North, Range 2 East, Seward Meridian
- 18
- 19 Section 36: Portions located below the ordinary high water of Knik River;
- 20
- 21 (12) Township 17 North, Range 3 East, Seward Meridian
- 22
- 23 Sections 1 – 5
- 24
- 25 Sections 9 – 16
- 26
- 27 Section 17: S1/2
- 28
- 29 Sections 20 – 29
- 30
- 31 Section 31: NE1/4NE1/4, S1/2NE1/4, SE1/4, SW1/4 located below the ordinary high water
- 32 of Knik River
- 33
- 34 Sections 32 - 36;
- 35
- 36 (13) Township 17 North, Range 4 East, Seward Meridian;
- 37
- 38 (14) Township 17 North, Range 5 East, Seward Meridian;
- 39
- 40 (15) Township 17 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian;
- 41
- 42 (16) Township 18 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian.

## 1 **Appendix J: Implementation of Commercial Use** 2 **Policy**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### 26 **Allocation**

27 DNR will not limit the number of commercial use authorizations, unless an assessment of the  
28 commercial use warrants such a decision and if adequate justification for such an action is  
29 found to exist. DNR will monitor commercial use and may determine if limitations are  
30 appropriate for the future.  
31

1 **Commercial Camps**

2 Commercial use involving overnight camps must have a land use authorization. A land use  
3 authorization provides a guide/outfitter with an authorization to establish a camp at a variety  
4 of locations throughout the KRPUA. Commercial camps generally serve as a center for  
5 commercial operations, providing overnight accommodations for guests, guides, and  
6 employees. Camps generally include tents for shelter and cooking, and a human waste  
7 disposal system. Commercial camps do not include resource management camps or mining  
8 camps.  
9

10 The following guidelines apply to commercial camps on state land.

- 11
- 12 1. *Term of Use* – A land use permit will be issued for the term of actual use of the camp  
13 for the authorized activity, or the minimum length of time required by the applicant to  
14 carry out the intended use. Land use permits provide authorization on an annual  
15 basis, and in some cases for up to five years. Camps located in Public Use Sites may  
16 remain in one place for up to seven days before they must be disassembled and  
17 moved to another location at least one mile away. They are not allowed to return to  
18 the vacated site for a period of four days. Long term commercial camps will not be  
19 authorized in public use sites.
  - 20 2. *Commercial Use* – Land use permits authorize overnight commercial camps within  
21 the Knik River Public Use Area. Land use permit will not be authorized for personal  
22 camps.
  - 23 3. *Siting Criteria* – Camps will be sited consistent with the management intent for the  
24 unit. In order to protect public safety, minimize the negative impacts on water quality  
25 and public access, and to protect heritage sites, commercial camps will not be  
26 authorized:
    - 27 A. in Public Use Sites if operating for more than seven (7) days;
    - 28 B. within 100 feet of a waterbody or wetland;
    - 29 C. near identified heritage sites;
    - 30 D. if they block public easements, heavily used trails identified in the TMP, or  
31 seismic lines.  
32

33 **Fees**

34 DNR has established fees for authorizations related to commercial use and will apply these to  
35 land authorizations within the PUA. The cost of the permit shall be based on the following:  
36

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

# STATE OF ALASKA

## DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

### *DIVISION OF MINING, LAND AND WATER*

#### *RESOURCE ASSESSMENT & DEVELOPMENT SECTION*

**SARAH PALIN, GOVERNOR**

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The Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources adopts the Knik River Public Use Area Management Plan as an Area Plan and finds that it meets the requirements of AS 38.04.065 and 11 AAC 55.010-55.030 for land use plans. The Department of Natural Resources will manage state land within the planning boundaries consistent with this plan.

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Tom Irwin  
Department of Natural Resources

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Date