

management intent for the mouth of the Deshka Subunit and it is consistent with AS 41.23.400 - 510, DNR may consider conveyance or leasing the parcel under AS 38.05.810, or entering into a management agreement. Lands that may be addressed by conveyance or lease are in Section 35, T19N, R6W, and include the two vegetated point bars east of the mouth of the Deshka River and northwest of the main channel of the Susitna River. A plan amendment is not required to convey, lease or reclassify this parcel as long as it is consistent with this intent.

Department of Fish and Game Site. DFG manages a site near RM 2 under an Interagency Land Management Agreement (ILMA) with DNR. The site will be managed consistent with the ILMA. DFG and the Division of Fish and Wildlife Protection currently have cabins on the site. Agency management cabins and storage areas should be consolidated as much as possible. Cabins for DNR field staff and equipment may be constructed near the DFG camp. Since well-drained uplands adjacent to the river in state ownership are limited within this subunit, these lands should be retained in state ownership. See guidelines for *Resource Management Camps* in Chapter 2.

Heritage Resources. Historic and prehistoric sites near the mouth should be evaluated for their interpretive values for tourism and general public interest. Since most of these sites are located on private land, this will require the cooperation of property owners.

Public Information. A sign should be placed at the mouth of the Deshka River identifying the boundary of the Recreation River. A kiosk or visitor contact station should be established in cooperation with the borough to provide information on the use of the river. In addition, a kiosk or other informational display should be located at the Susitna Landing (in cooperation with DFG) and the Deshka Landing (in cooperation with the private landowner).

Weapons. Between June 15 and August 31, discharge of weapons is prohibited within one-quarter mile of the river on state land and water between the mouth of the Deshka River and the DFG camp. See *Recreation, Use of Weapons* in Chapter 3.

Public Use Sites. Unlike other subunits where public use sites were identified, this entire subunit receives high public use and will be managed as important for access, fishing, camping, or other recreation and public use.

2b. Lower Deshka River Subunit

Background

RIVER MILES/RIVER CHARACTERISTICS, RM 1.9 to RM 6.8

This subunit extends from the DFG cabin to the Laub Homestead. The immediate upland terrain is flat to rolling with occasional 30 to 50 foot cut-banks. The river contains numerous channels and islands. The channel is 100 to 200 feet wide. The water is usually brown and relatively slow moving. Less than 25 percent of the subunit is contiguous wetlands. All wetlands are located on the east side of the river.

LAND OWNERSHIP

State	2,084 acres
Matanuska/Susitna Borough	686 acres
3 Private Parcels	254 acres
Total	3,020 acres

FISHERIES

This segment contains at least two popular fishing areas, although visitor use here is lower than at the mouth of the river. The DFG data suggests 9 to 20 percent of the total Deshka River use occurs within this subunit.

WILDLIFE

There is a trumpeter swan nest on a pond near RM 6. Active bald eagle nests have not been sighted in recent surveys of this subunit.

CAMPING

Camping is concentrated between RM 2 and RM 5, particularly near Silver Hole. The following undeveloped campsites have been identified:

Primary	0
Secondary	15
Marginal	3

DEVELOPMENT

There are five cabins and one large homestead in the subunit. The homestead has been used in the past for commercial recreation.

ACCESS

One seismic line near the homestead is used for year-round access by off-road-vehicles. There are two private airstrips. Considerable powerboat traffic travels through this reach enroute to various fishing areas. Navigability is marginal at about RM 5.5 at low water levels.

HERITAGE RESOURCES

The heritage site potential in this subunit is high, primarily due to the high number of house pits in the area. Most of the known sites are on private land.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Timber has been cleared for the two airstrips under permits.

Management Intent

Class II. This subunit receives high public use because of its proximity to the mouth of the Deshka River, and the opportunities it provides for a variety of recreation uses. This subunit features fishing, camping, powerboating, and floating opportunities in a moderately accessible natural setting. In winter the subunit is used by snow-machiners, dog mushers and skiers. The area contains salmon spawning and moose wintering habitat. Private lands are located along the river in the northern half of the subunit. The subunit will be managed to provide and enhance these recreation opportunities, and fish and wildlife

habitat while accommodating uses associated with private lands. A limited number of commercial camps may be authorized. Maintaining public use sites will be a high priority. There are no non-motorized areas in this subunit. Warning signs will be placed at the Silver Hole (PU 2b.1) to warn boaters to reduce speed when anglers are present.

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

Management Guidelines

Boating Restrictions. None

Commercial Camps. A maximum of two commercial camps may be authorized in this subunit. Commercial camps will not be authorized in public use sites.

Camping Limits. If borough camping policies result in trespass, sanitation problems, overcrowd

ing, threats to public safety, or resource damage on state lands, DNR will work with the borough to address these problems. Limits in addition to the four-day camping limit on state land may be considered. If needed, these limits may be established through regulation, designating the area a *Special Use Area* under 11 AAC 96.010, or under the closures and use management provisions described under Recreation in Chapter 2.

Public Use Sites

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

- PU 2b.1** **Silver Hole(s)** (RM 3.9). This site is used for camping and fishing. Users camp both on the shore and in their boats.
- PU 2b.2** **Walk-in Fishing Hole** (RM 6). This is a popular fishing and camping site.

2c. Middle Deshka River Subunit

Background

MILES OF RIVER/RIVER CHARACTERISTICS, RM 6.8 to RM 14.4

This subunit extends from the Laub Homestead to Trapper Creek. Wetlands are located adjacent to the river and cover less than 25 percent of the upland area.

LAND OWNERSHIP

State	2,617 acres
Matanuska/Susitna Borough	1,600 acres
32 Private Parcels	148 acres
Total	4,365 acres

WILDLIFE

Neither active bald eagle nor trumpeter swan nests have been sighted in recent surveys of this subunit.

CAMPING

Good campsites are scarce in this subunit. Only 3 secondary campsites were observed.

DEVELOPMENT

Nine cabins and three lodges are located in this subunit. All the cabins are located in the northern half of this subunit along the river.

ACCESS

Powerboat activity is heavy in this subunit during highwater periods. River navigability becomes marginal during low water levels in late summer. A tractor trail and seismic line are used by vehicles at RM 10 on the west side of the river.

HERITAGE RESOURCES

The potential to locate heritage sites in this subunit is high.

Management Intent

Class II. This subunit features high quality fishing, hunting, and camping opportunities for powerboaters and floaters in a relatively remote, undeveloped setting. In winter the subunit is used by snowmachiners, dog mushers, and skiers. There are also a number of private parcels in the subunit. The subunit contains salmon spawning

and moose wintering habitat. The subunit will be managed to provide and enhance these recreation opportunities, and fish and wildlife habitat, while accommodating uses associated with private lands. A limited number of temporary camps will be allowed. Maintaining public use sites will be a high priority. A voluntary no-wake area is