

6b. Upper Alexander Creek Subunit

Background

MILES OF RIVER/RIVER CHARACTERISTICS, RM 20.1 to RM 38.3

The subunit begins above the mouth of Sucker Creek and extends to the south end of a trail downstream from Alexander Lake. The creek is 3 to 4 feet deep, and 20 to 50 feet wide. The water is generally clear above RM 25 but becomes silty below this point. The terrain is gently rolling. Contiguous wetlands cover about half of the area.

LAND OWNERSHIP

There are 8,085 acres of state land in this subunit.

WILDLIFE

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

CAMPING

There are numerous secondary and marginal campsites along the entire length of the subunit.

DEVELOPMENT

There are two cabins and docks under state lease on Rose Lake at RM 33. A cabin ruin is located at RM 31.

ACCESS

There is a short trail between Rose Lake and the Alexander Creek. The lake is also used by floatplanes, often to drop off floaters. In past years the Iditarod dogsled race has been run on the trail which crosses Alexander Creek near RM 21. This trail is still used for the Iditaski and Iron Dog races. Seismic lines along the river are also used for winter access. There are extensive open bogs adjacent to the river that are used for snow-machining.

HERITAGE RESOURCES

The heritage site potential is high.

Management Intent

Class I. Most recreation use in this subunit occurs during the king and silver salmon runs. Because of good fishing, relatively inexpensive air transportation from the railbelt, and the placid nature of the river, this subunit receives moderate use by floaters. Suitability for powerboat use is marginal because of low water volumes. The subunit provides high quality floatboat opportunities in a relatively remote, undeveloped setting. The area contains important winter moose habitat and

supports salmon spawning. The subunit will be managed to provide and enhance recreation opportunities, a primitive setting, and fish and wildlife habitat. Maintaining an essentially unmodified natural environment will be the focus of management. Maintaining public use sites will be a high priority. With the exception of the Rose Lake special management area, the subunit will be managed to provide a non-motorized experience during the fishing season.

Management Guidelines

Boating Restrictions. See management guidelines for the Alexander Creek Management Unit described earlier in this section.

Iditarod National Historic Trail and Iditarod Race Trail. Both trail systems parallel the river in this subunit between Yensus Lake and Alexander Lake. See guidelines in Chapter 2, *Upland Access, Trails, Iditarod National Historic Trail and Iditarod Race Trail.*

Special Management Areas

See *Special Management Areas* in Chapter 2 for management guidelines. Specific locations of sites are shown on the map at the end of this unit.

- SMA 6b.1 Rose Lake (RM 33).** There are two parcels under state lease on the lake which contain cabins and docks. Floatplanes use the lake. The Special Management Area (SMA) will be managed as a Class II area. Class II area management intent and guidelines will apply. This area will be managed to accommodate uses associated with existing state leases in the SMA while providing and enhancing recreation opportunities, and fish and wildlife habitat.