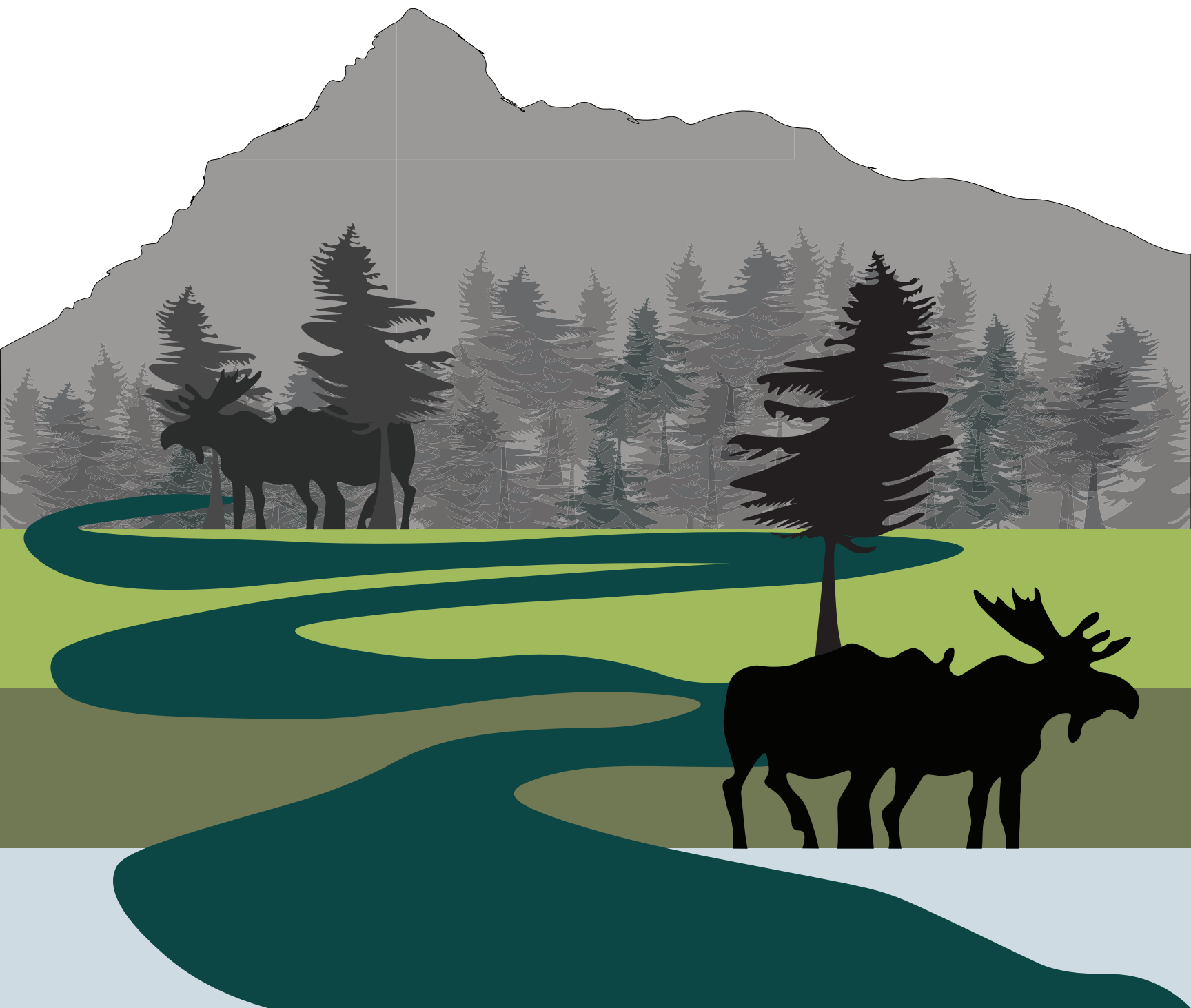


# Matanuska Valley Moose Range and Jonesville Public Use Area Management Plan



July 2, 2024

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







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July 2, 2024

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

This document has been released by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Mining, Land and Water, for the purpose of informing the public about the Matanuska Valley Moose Range and Jonesville Public Use Area Management Plan. This is the digital version of the plan; the format varies slightly from the printed version, however page numbers in both versions are the same.



THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

## Department of Natural Resources

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

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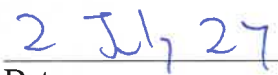
### ADOPTION OF THE 2024 MATANUSKA VALLEY MOOSE RANGE AND JONESVILLE PUBLIC USE AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN

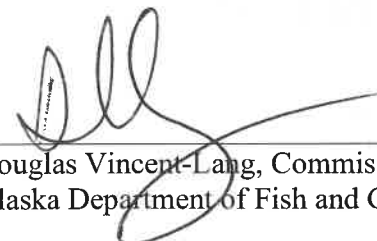
The Commissioners of the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Fish & Game find that the Matanuska Valley Moose Range and Jonesville Public Use Area Management Plan meets the requirements of the following Alaska Statutes and Titles and hereby adopts the plan:

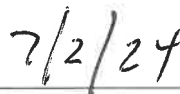
- AS 38.04.065 (Land use planning and classification)
- AS 16.20.340-360 (Act creating the Matanuska Valley Moose Range)
- AS 41.23.280-289 (Act creating the Jonesville Public Use Area)
- 11 AAC 55.10-55.030 (Land planning and classification)

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Department of Fish & Game (DF&G) will manage state land, fish, and wildlife consistent with this plan and will use it as guidance when implementing agency authorities under Titles 16 (Fish & Game), 38 (Public Land) and 41 (Public Resources) of the Alaska Statutes. DNR and DF&G will cooperatively manage the Matanuska Valley Moose Range and Jonesville Public Use Area.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John Boyle, Commissioner  
Alaska Department of Natural Resources

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Douglas Vincent-Lang, Commissioner  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



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# Chapter 1 : Introduction and Background

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## Purpose of the Plan

The Matanuska Valley Moose Range (Moose Range or Range) is an area rich in natural resource values. The lands within the Moose Range support abundant fish and wildlife populations, contain timber, non-timber forest products and high-grade coal reserves, and provide a variety of outdoor recreational and cultural opportunities.

In response to the increasing need to both utilize and protect natural resources in the area, the Alaska State Legislature passed the act which created the Matanuska Valley Moose Range in 1984. The Moose Range was established to maintain, improve, and enhance moose populations and habitat and other wildlife resources of the area, and to perpetuate public multiple uses of the area, including fishing, grazing, forest management, hunting, trapping, mineral and coal entry and development, and other forms of uses of public land compatible with the purposes stated (Alaska Statute (AS) 16.20.340).

The enabling legislation requires the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to develop and adopt a management plan for the Moose Range in cooperation and concurrence with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). The first management plan was completed in 1986, however since that time much has changed. Coal has been extracted and surface mines have been reclaimed, additional coal leases have been issued and mines permitted, and the population of Alaska and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) has expanded, greatly increasing the demand for outdoor recreation opportunities in the area.

Although a multitude of uses coexisted for many years, conflicts have increased in the last decade near Palmer, the Buffalo Mine community, and the community of Sutton as more people are using the area. The reclaimed site of the Jonesville Mine, Slipper Lake, and nearby trails have received the heaviest amount of public recreation use including hiking, biking, winter biking, skiing, ATV riding, snow-machining, horseback riding, school outings, target shooting, camping/RVing, hunting, fishing, and trapping. Additionally, there are significant public health and safety concerns in the Jonesville area due to a variety of illegal, destructive, and unsafe uses that are incompatible with outdoor recreation activities enjoyed by the public. The most concerning of these are dangerous and unlawful operation of motor vehicles, the detonation of explosives, and illegal discharge of firearms.

In response to these concerns, the Alaska Legislature created the Jonesville Public Use Area (JPUA) in AS 41.23.280-289. The purpose of the JPUA is to (1) protect, maintain, enhance, and perpetuate year-round public recreation; (2) protect and maintain fish and wildlife habitat so that the public may continue to enjoy traditional uses of the JPUA; (3) provide opportunities for the public to enjoy the area through a full spectrum of public uses, including the maintenance and enhancement of off-road vehicle and nonmotorized recreational opportunities for the public; and (4) allow continued mineral exploration and development activities, motorized access to private property (including subsurface rights), and other compatible public uses.

The designation of the JPUA almost entirely within the Moose Range, with specific guidance for managing multiple resource uses, provides the opportunity to develop an improved framework for DNR and other managing agencies to manage incompatible uses, minimize impacts to resources, and enforce subsequent regulations.

The Moose Range and the JPUA, due to their overlapping boundaries and similar purposes, will be managed through one management plan. The JPUA and lands adjacent to the JPUA will be managed as the Jonesville Subunit of the Moose Range and includes unit-specific management guidelines that implement the intent of the JPUA enabling legislation.

## Organization of the Plan

The plan is organized in four main chapters.

### Chapter 1: Introduction

Provides the reader with the general purpose and organization of the management plan, and an overall description of the management area.

### Chapter 2: Areawide Goals and Management Guidelines

Provides a brief description of the resources within the Moose Range and JPUA and describes the areawide land management policies that will apply to the Moose Range and JPUA.

### Chapter 3: Land Management Guidelines for Individual Subunits

Describes the management intent and subunit specific land management policies for each of the four management subunits.

### Chapter 4: Implementation

This implementation chapter describes the priorities for actions agencies need to take to manage the Moose Range and JPUA including a preliminary description of regulations that will need to be promulgated to implement the plan.

The appendices, located at the end of the document, include a Glossary, a Land Classification Order, a description of the Trail Management Plan Process, and Enabling Legislation for both the Moose Range and the JPUA.

## The Planning Area

See Map 1: Land Status (page 1-5)

### Matanuska Valley Moose Range

The Moose Range in Southcentral Alaska is a Legislatively Designated Area (LDA) that is nestled in the southern foothills of the Talkeetna Mountains east of the Little Susitna River and north of the Glenn Highway. The Moose Range is located northeast of Palmer, Alaska and adjacent to the Glenn Highway

between Mile Posts (MP) 59 and MP 80. The Moose Range consists of portions of the Moose, Eska, Granite, Young, California and Boulder Creek drainages, as well as the Kings and Chickaloon River drainages. The rural communities of Sutton and Chickaloon are located within the area.

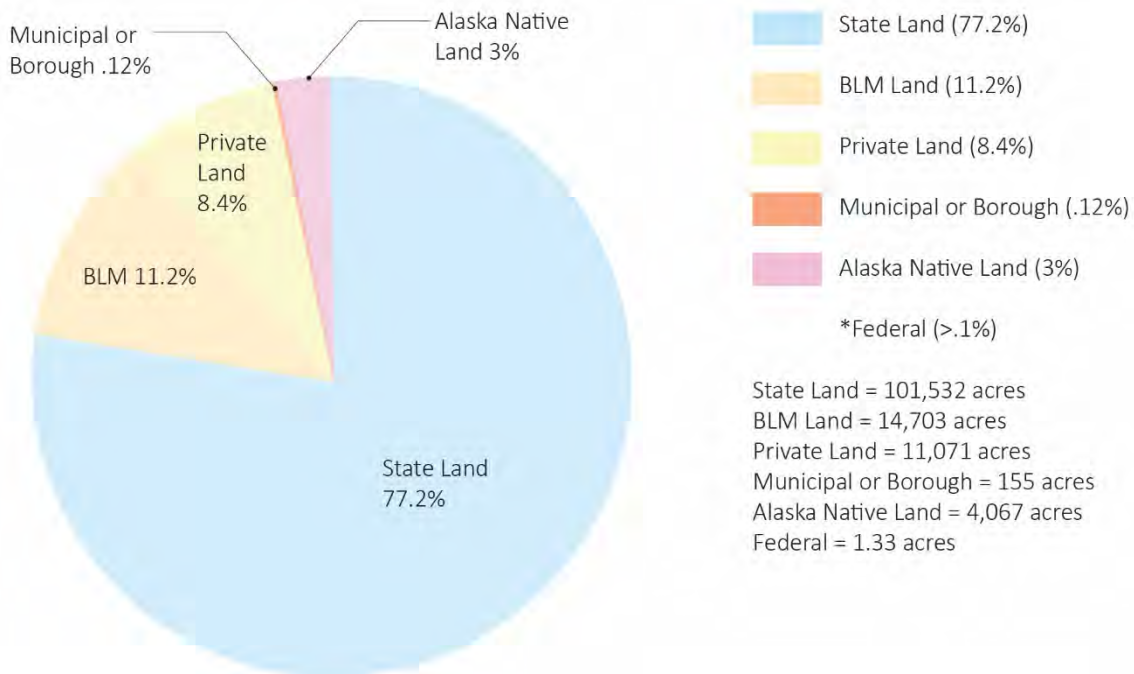
### Jonesville Public Use Area

The Jonesville Public Use Area is located almost entirely within the Moose Range and consists of 14,614 acres. The area is accessed by N. Jonesville Mine Road north of the Glenn Highway in Sutton near MP 61 and other access points between MP 57 and MP 62 and is a highly accessible recreation spot, within a 1-2-hour drive of most Alaskans in southcentral Alaska. With acres of rugged countryside, lakes, creeks and waterfalls, abundant wildlife and established trails, the area has long provided a wide variety of recreational opportunities. The JPUA includes the Eska Creek Drainage, Slipper Lake, Wishbone Lake, and the majority of authorized subsurface coal resources in the area.

### Land Ownership

There are just over 131,500 acres of land within the Moose Range and JPUA. The Moose Range contains lands owned by the State of Alaska, MSB, private citizens, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and Alaska Native organizations. The policies in this plan apply only to state land. A breakdown of the acreage owned by each organization is shown in Figure 1. Note that the BLM land, in many cases, is selected by the state and/or Alaska Native organizations and is yet to be transferred.

**FIGURE 1: LAND OWNERSHIP SUMMARY**

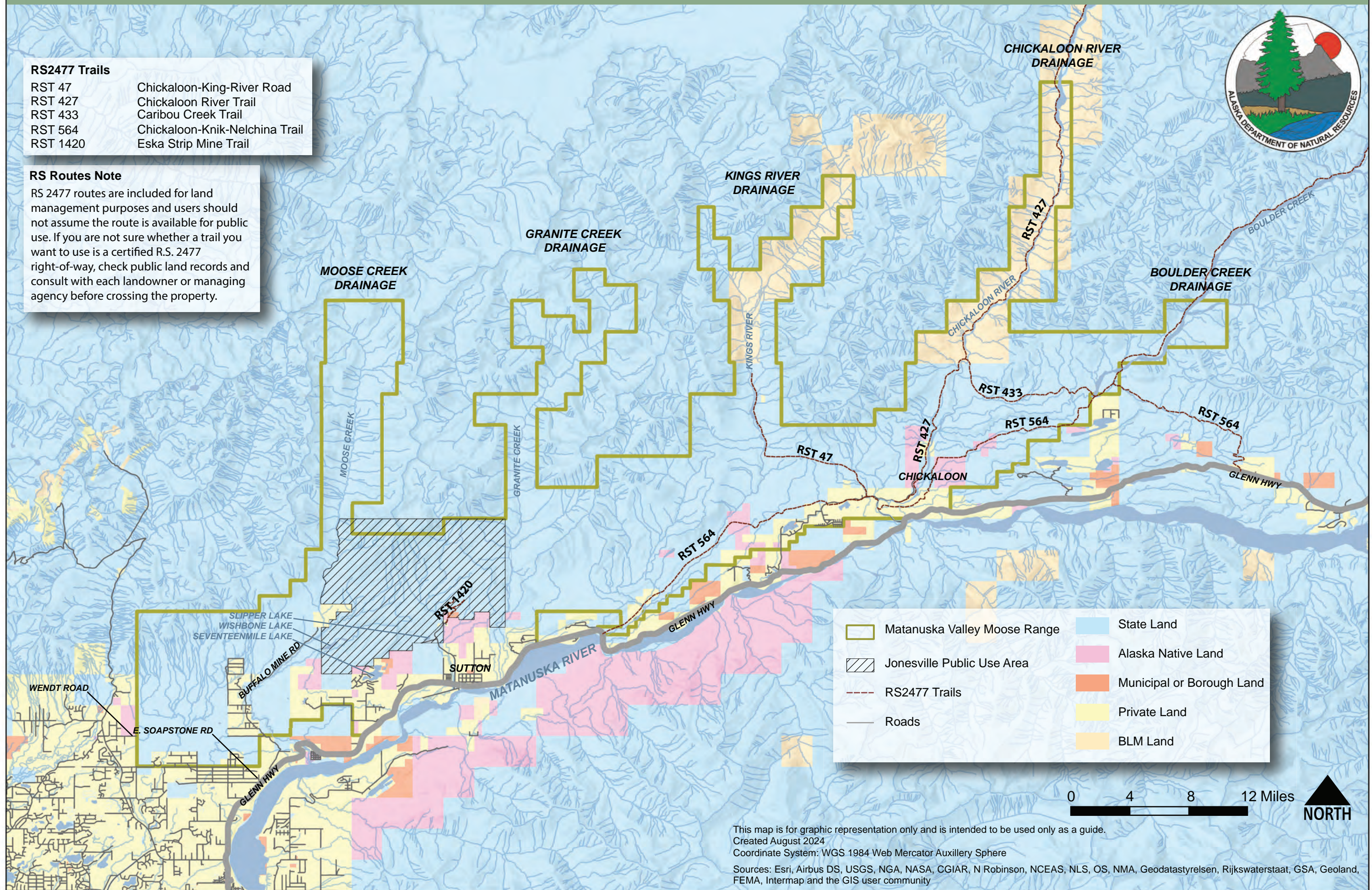


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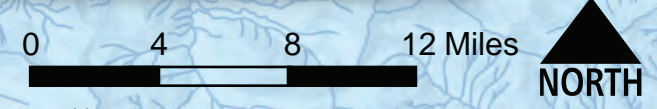


- RS2477 Trails**
- RST 47 Chickaloon-King-River Road
  - RST 427 Chickaloon River Trail
  - RST 433 Caribou Creek Trail
  - RST 564 Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail
  - RST 1420 Eska Strip Mine Trail

**RS Routes Note**  
 RS 2477 routes are included for land management purposes and users should not assume the route is available for public use. If you are not sure whether a trail you want to use is a certified R.S. 2477 right-of-way, check public land records and consult with each landowner or managing agency before crossing the property.



Matanuska Valley Moose Range	State Land
Jonesville Public Use Area	Alaska Native Land
RS2477 Trails	Municipal or Borough Land
Roads	Private Land
	BLM Land



This map is for graphic representation only and is intended to be used only as a guide.  
 Created August 2024  
 Coordinate System: WGS 1984 Web Mercator Auxillary Sphere  
 Sources: Esri, Airbus DS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatastyrelsen, Rijkswaterstaat, GSA, Geoland, FEMA, Intermap and the GIS user community

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# Planning Process

## How the Plan Was Developed

The major steps used in developing the Moose Range and Jonesville Public Use Area Management Plan are as follows:

1. Public Issues Identified. In September 2022, public scoping meetings were held in Sutton, Anchorage, Chickaloon, Wasilla, and virtually to learn about local knowledge of the Moose Range and JPUA, local problems, land use preferences, and concerns about uses of state lands. Approximately 54 people participated in the scoping meetings and more than 200 individuals submitted more than 450 individual comments.
2. Information Gathered and Analyzed. Information about natural resources, existing land uses, land ownership, economic and social characteristics was gathered, mapped, and analyzed. A summary of this information is in Chapter 2. This step was completed in September 2022.
3. Management Recommendations Prepared. Management recommendations for use of the resources in the Moose Range were developed. These plans were based on legislative intent, existing state policies, public comments, and resource characteristics.
4. Draft Management Plan for State Lands Prepared. Using public and agency comments gathered during the scoping period, the draft management plan was developed.
5. Public Draft Plan Reviewed. Agencies, stakeholders, and the public reviewed and provided comments on the draft management plan. Meetings were held in Sutton, Palmer, Chickaloon, and virtually in October 2023.
6. Final Plan Prepared. The final plan recommending management actions and management guidelines was developed in the winter and spring of 2023-2024 based on agency and public comments.
7. Plan is Adopted and Implemented. The Commissioners of the DNR and ADF&G adopted the final plan on July 2, 2024. All uses of the state's land and resources in the Moose Range and JPUA must be consistent with the plan or its amendments for the life of this management plan, estimated at 20 years.

## Management Plan Goals

The overarching goals of this management plan include:

1. Provide overall guidance to DNR, ADF&G, and other land managers as management decisions are made for the planning area. Actions taken by DNR, ADF&G, and other land managers must be consistent with this plan.
2. Recommend facilities to meet the current and future needs of the public.
3. Identify compatible and incompatible uses on which to base management guidelines and recommendations.
4. Provide relevant resources and use information on which DNR can base decisions.
5. Provide the public and stakeholders with a meaningful opportunity to participate in the development of the Moose Range and JPUA management plan.

## What this Plan Will Do

The Moose Range and JPUA management plan directs DNR and ADF&G decision making for state-owned land and waters and resources within the plan boundary. The plan will help ensure that state land and resource managers consider the sustained yield of renewable resources, that development is balanced with environmental concerns, and that public multiple use of and access to state land is provided. Finally, the plan documents the state's intent for land management so that the public knows how the state intends to manage land over the period the plan is in effect.

Specifically, this management plan for the Moose Range and JPUA will:

- Provide for the management of state land as provided in the implementing legislation (AS 16.20.340-360 and AS 41.23.280-41.23.289).
- This management plan will supersede all current management direction previously provided by the Susitna Matanuska Area Plan (SMAP). This plan will also reclassify state lands previously classified by area plans within the boundaries of the Moose Range and JPUA.
- A small section of state land was legislatively designated as the JPUA but was not within the boundary of the Moose Range (see Map 6, page 3-20). This plan will supersede all other management direction previously provided by other plans.
- Address trails management and other natural resource protection measures in the Moose Range and JPUA.
- Recommend designated areas for shooting ranges.
- Provide the basis for development of regulations necessary to implement the plan.
- Make recommendations for limits on some activities that are more restrictive than Generally Allowed Uses (GAUs). GAUs are identified in 11 AAC 96.020 and the conditions for GAUs are provided in 11 AAC 96.025.

## What this Plan Will Not Do

The Moose Range and JPUA Management Plan is not the only way in which land management goals are implemented. While the Plan provides an overall basis for state decision making, it is important to recognize that there are limits on its authority and constraints on its application. The following are some important aspects of land and resource management that are beyond the scope of this plan:

- This Plan does not apply to Federal, Native, private lands, University of Alaska, Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, or Mental Health Trust Land.
- Management, maintenance, and protection of fish and wildlife are the responsibility of ADF&G. Allocation of fish and game stocks and regulation of harvest methods, means, and timing are the responsibility of the State Boards of Fisheries and Game.
- While this Plan provides general management intent for state lands, the Plan does not make decisions about specific land-use authorizations. These decisions are made by land and resource managers through the application review process. Decisions and their stipulations must be consistent with the Plan and existing laws and regulations.

- This Plan does not provide management intent for prescribing actions and policies for agencies and governments other than DNR and ADF&G.
- This Plan does not provide recommendations for the management of subsurface resources.

## Planning Context

### Relationship of the Moose Range and JPUA Enabling Legislation to Other Statutes

The legislation that created the Moose Range intends to maintain, improve, and enhance moose populations and habitat and other wildlife resources of the area while perpetuating public multiple use. The JPUA legislation intends to perpetuate and enhance public recreation and public enjoyment of fish and wildlife and to protect and maintain fish and wildlife and their habitat. All management actions by the implementing agency must be consistent with Alaska Statutes AS 16.20.340-360 (Moose Range) and AS 41.23.280-41.23.289 (JPUA).

In the absence of more specific guidance contained in the legislation for the Moose Range and JPUA, other provisions of Title 38 (public land) and Title 16 (fish & game) may apply. In addition, other provisions of state and federal laws and MSB code may also apply to the area.

Other state laws applicable to resource management in the Moose Range and JPUA include but are not limited to:

1. Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act (AS 41.17). The Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act (AFRP) governs how timber harvesting, reforestation, and timber access occur on state, private, and municipal land. The act is designed to protect fish habitat and water quality and ensure prompt reforestation of forest land while providing for a healthy timber industry.

### Relationship to Other Plans and Agreements

Land within the Moose Range and JPUA has historically been guided by the Matanuska Valley Moose Range Management Plan that was adopted in 1986. The Moose Range Management Plan is consistent with other state, federal, and MSB plans and statutes, described below, that provide additional overarching guidance that have been considered during the development of this plan.

#### Federal Laws and Programs

The Federal Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act was signed into law on August 3, 1977 to regulate surface coal mining and reclamation nationwide. In May of 1983, the State of Alaska took primacy of the Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) program which is charged with cleaning up coal mines that were abandoned prior to 1977. The AML program is funded by the AML Trust Fund, which is administered by the Federal Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE). In addition to the AML program, the State of Alaska also took over the Regulatory program from OSMRE. The Regulatory program is responsible for current coal mining operations on state, borough, and private lands in Alaska.

These federal laws and programs guide coal mining authorizations and reclamation projects in the Moose Range and JPUA.

#### Matanuska-Susitna Borough Plans

1. Matanuska-Susitna Borough Comprehensive Development Plan. The 2005 Matanuska-Susitna Borough Comprehensive Development Plan (MSBCDP) consists of a variety of plans addressing MSB and community needs and issues. The comprehensive plan provides general goals and policy recommendations to help guide future development of MSB lands.
2. Matanuska-Susitna Borough Jonesville Public Use Area Management Plan. In October of 2021, the Mat-Su Borough Community Development Department finalized a management plan for the Jonesville Public Use Area. The Mat-Su Borough Assembly adopted the management plan by ordinance (OR 21-118) on December 21, 2021. The MSB management plan only applies to MSB lands within JPUA. By Alaska Statute and regulations, DNR is required to adopt, maintain, and revise land use plans for the use and management of state-owned land. DNR has considered and included appropriate elements of the MSB plan as part of this planning effort as a significant amount of public engagement and community consensus-building went into the development of the borough's plan. However, Jonesville's context as part of the larger Matanuska Valley Moose Range required DNR to complete a larger, more comprehensive update to the Moose Range Management Plan to ensure that the Moose Range and JPUA Management Plan adequately recognizes and protects state interests.
3. Sutton Comprehensive Plan. The 2009 Sutton Comprehensive Plan is an element of the MSBCDP and includes the following recommendations relevant to the Moose Range and JPUA:
  - Encourage a balance between motorized and non-motorized use, particularly in sensitive areas.
  - Maintain and operate public facilities in the JPUA including restrooms and trash cans.
  - Develop lake access improvements for Slipper and Coyote lakes.
  - Manage and protect public safety and health at public facilities and recreation areas.
  - Encourage the borough, state, and private stakeholders to take an active role in the planning, construction, maintenance and operation of the facilities and trails.
  - Encourage enforcement of regulations and laws that address nuisance, noise, trash, vandalism, and other criminal activity.
  - Solicit input from the Sutton Community Council and trail users.
  - Support private contracts between the borough, state, and other governmental and private entities to build, monitor and maintain facilities.
  - Consider opportunities such as park hosts for these facilities.
  - Identify opportunities for public and private partnerships for the appropriate location and development of organized shooting opportunities. Such facilities should be conditionally permitted to allow adequate input on safety, hours of operation, lighting, etc.
4. Chickaloon Community Comprehensive Plan. The 2008 Chickaloon Community Comprehensive Plan contains the following recommendations relevant to the Moose Range and JPUA Management Plan:

- Open space and natural areas are preferable to large clearings and filled in wetlands.
  - Gravel roads, fresh air, clean water, quiet neighborhoods, access to traditional hunting areas, and access to public lands and water are essential in supporting what residents define as the rural character of the area.
  - Chickaloon supports the reservation and development of trails that connect open areas to residential and commercial areas.
  - Build and maintain a trailhead facility at Kings River to protect the river and provide safe access.
  - Relocate trails to avoid private property conflicts.
  - Protect important historical sites and trails.
  - Pursue National Historic designation for the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail.
5. Fishhook Community Comprehensive Plan. The 2017 Fishhook Community Comprehensive Plan contains the following recommendations relevant to the Moose Range and JPUA Management Plan:
- Maintain access to public open space.
  - The Moose Range is important for water quantity and quality as an aquifer recharge area, migratory bird habitat, hunting, year-round recreation, and salmon production and activities.
  - Manage trail user conflicts using enforcement, signage, and user education.
  - Encourage the State of AK to defend RS2477 trails.
  - Work cooperatively with DNR to develop and maintain a multi-use trail system within the Matanuska Valley Moose Range and revise a management plan to benefit all user groups as well as fish and wildlife.

## Summary of Plan Actions

### Management Intent

The planning area consists of two Legislatively Designated Areas, the Moose Range and the JPUA. The planning area has been further divided into four management subunits. The Plan presents management intent for each subunit and explains the overall land and resource management goals for each subunit. This information is presented in Chapter 3.

### Management Guidelines

When potentially conflicting uses are designated in a management unit, the plan provides guidelines to allow various uses to occur without unacceptable consequences. Management guidelines for specific management units are given in Chapter 3. Guidelines that apply to the entire planning area are identified in Chapter 2.

### Land Use Designations and Land Classifications

State lands in the planning area will be classified consistent with the land use designations established and described in Chapter 3 of this Plan. A table that shows how designations convert to classifications can be found in Chapter 4. Each of the four management subunits identifies up to three designations representing the uses and resources for which the area will be managed. These designations are then implemented through land classifications as defined by 11 AAC 55.020-277. Land Classification Order SC-

23-001 supersedes all classifications within the planning area. The Land Classification Order (LCO) that is to be adopted with this plan is included as Appendix B.

### Plan Implementation and Modification

The plan is implemented through subsequent regulations and the LCO which serves as the final finding for land classification. The plan sets forth policy for DNR in administering land authorizations in consultation with ADF&G. Chapter 4 presents the details of plan implementation recommendations and procedures.

Economic and social conditions in Alaska and the planning area are sure to change and the plan must be flexible enough to change with them. The plan will be reviewed periodically to monitor progress in implementing the plan and to identify issues that may require amendment or modification.

Specific modifications may be made whenever conditions warrant them, though a request for these changes must follow certain procedures (11 AAC 55.030). The plan may be amended after approval by the Commissioners of DNR and ADF&G following public review and consultation with the appropriate agencies. See Chapter 4 for a more detailed description of procedures for plan modifications, amendments, special exceptions, and minor changes.

# Chapter 2 : Areawide Goals and Management Guidelines

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## Introduction

The following chapter describes the areawide land management guidelines that have been developed to manage public lands in the Matanuska Valley Moose Range and JPUA. These management guidelines will supplement existing state policy and procedure manuals, state statutes, and state and federal regulations. This chapter will identify more specific management direction for the Moose Range and JPUA while implementing the statutory purposes of the enabling legislation of each. This chapter presents areawide goals, objectives, and management guidelines for major resources and activities. Chapter 3 contains unit-specific guidelines that apply to discreet management units of the Moose Range and JPUA.

## Definitions

### Goals

Goals are generally desired conditions that DNR strives to achieve through management actions.

### Objectives

Objectives describe the comprehensive approach to achieve the identified goals for each major resource or use in the Moose Range and JPUA.

### Management Guidelines

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

## Overall Plan Goals

The plan provides for multiple uses of public land, as required by legislation, and the guidelines provide compatibility among these uses. In the long term the land within the Moose Range and JPUA will be used for as many uses as possible, without eliminating, or unreasonably limiting other resources.

The goals of the plan are:

1. To maintain, improve or enhance moose populations and habitat either through forestry practices that also provide for personal and commercial forest products harvesting, or direct habitat manipulation by fire or mechanized means.
2. To maintain, improve, or enhance other fish and wildlife populations.
3. To provide opportunities for coal mining and mineral development.
4. To improve and enhance moose populations through reclamation of coal mined lands to productive wildlife habitat.
5. To preserve opportunities for materials extraction.
6. To provide forest products and non-timber forest product opportunities to meet local needs, including for fuelwood and house logs, when complementary to wildlife habitat needs.
7. To reduce user conflicts.
8. To provide for dispersed outdoor recreational opportunities within the Moose Range and JPUA.

The Moose Range and Jonesville Public Use Area will be managed for multiple use. This requires a combined, cooperative effort by DNR and ADF&G.

## Access

### Background

On-the-ground access to public lands is a major factor in determining applicable management options. The Moose Range and JPUA are easily accessible from the Glenn Highway and other developed roads from the communities of Palmer, Sutton, and Chickaloon. Access to the Moose Range and JPUA is gained via several roads and trails (See Map 2 on page 2-5). Many of the access trails and roads being used by the public were constructed during coal exploration in the mid-1900s.

The roads and trails in Map 2 have been identified as access points to the Moose Range or JPUA. Any management actions regarding their legal status must be researched and verified.

### Goals

1. Provide access to the Moose Range and JPUA to perpetuate public multiple use of the area, including fishing, grazing, forest management, hunting, trapping, mineral and coal entry and development, and public recreational uses.
2. Continue public access on trails in the Moose Range and JPUA.
3. Minimize disturbance or damage to wildlife populations and wildlife habitats that could occur because of increased public use of the Moose Range and JPUA.

### Objectives

The public requires authorized access into the Moose Range and JPUA for outdoor recreation. Government agencies require authorized access into the Moose Range and JPUA for the purpose of maintaining, improving, and enhancing fish and wildlife populations, and perpetuating public multiple use of the area. The state should base access for resource development on existing road systems wherever possible, rather than develop additional roads until further analysis determines the need for additional road construction. Several roads and trails provide access into the Moose Range including

Fish Lake Road, Jonesville Mine Road, Wendt Road, Buffalo Mine Road, Permanente Road, Fish Lake Subdivision Road, and Chickaloon River Road. New access may be developed for timber harvest and/or habitat enhancement efforts.

For dispersed public recreation, projects that establish legal public access for motorized and non-motorized travelers and development of trailhead-parking facilities have the highest priority.

DNR will assert public right-of-way on legal public access routes and grant easements as appropriate. The state will strive to educate the public as to legal access, and clarify private and public lands to reduce trespass, as funding allows.

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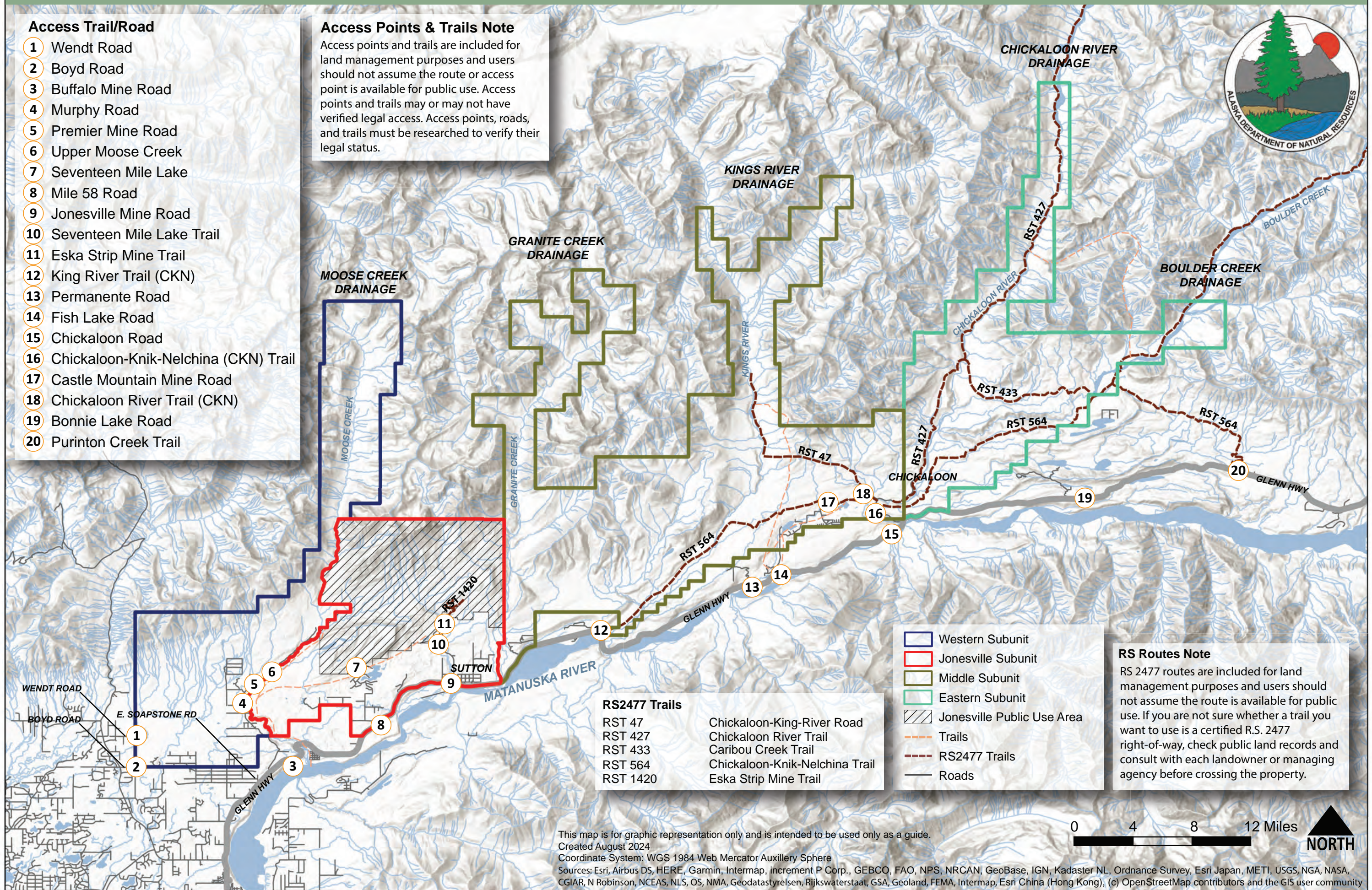


**Access Trail/Road**

- 1 Wendt Road
- 2 Boyd Road
- 3 Buffalo Mine Road
- 4 Murphy Road
- 5 Premier Mine Road
- 6 Upper Moose Creek
- 7 Seventeen Mile Lake
- 8 Mile 58 Road
- 9 Jonesville Mine Road
- 10 Seventeen Mile Lake Trail
- 11 Eska Strip Mine Trail
- 12 King River Trail (CKN)
- 13 Permanente Road
- 14 Fish Lake Road
- 15 Chickaloon Road
- 16 Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina (CKN) Trail
- 17 Castle Mountain Mine Road
- 18 Chickaloon River Trail (CKN)
- 19 Bonnie Lake Road
- 20 Purinton Creek Trail

**Access Points & Trails Note**

Access points and trails are included for land management purposes and users should not assume the route or access point is available for public use. Access points and trails may or may not have verified legal access. Access points, roads, and trails must be researched to verify their legal status.



**RS2477 Trails**

- RST 47 Chickaloon-King-River Road
- RST 427 Chickaloon River Trail
- RST 433 Caribou Creek Trail
- RST 564 Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail
- RST 1420 Eska Strip Mine Trail

- Western Subunit
- Jonesville Subunit
- Middle Subunit
- Eastern Subunit
- Jonesville Public Use Area
- Trails
- RS2477 Trails
- Roads

**RS Routes Note**

RS 2477 routes are included for land management purposes and users should not assume the route is available for public use. If you are not sure whether a trail you want to use is a certified R.S. 2477 right-of-way, check public land records and consult with each landowner or managing agency before crossing the property.

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

Created August 2024

Coordinate System: WGS 1984 Web Mercator Auxillary Sphere

Sources: Esri, Airbus DS, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodastyrelsen, Rijkswaterstaat, GSA, Geoland, FEMA, Intermap, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors and the GIS user community

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## Management Guidelines

### 1. Public Access Assertion

- a. Continuing Assessment. Assessment of the public's ability to access roads and trails within the Moose Range and JPUA should continue as necessary.
- b. Verification and Protection of Access. DNR should verify and protect legal public access on existing roads and trails throughout the Moose Range and JPUA as staffing and funding allows.

### 2. Access for Mining

- a. Mining Access in Restricted Areas. Authorizations may be granted for development of mining access in any future proposed non-motorized areas. Access roads for mining will be kept to the minimum necessary to perform mineral exploration and production operations.
- b. Interagency Review. DNR's Mining Section shall consult with ADF&G and DMLW SCRO to make recommendations for routing potential mining roads in a manner which will enhance or have minimum impact on wildlife, fisheries, and recreation values. A well-placed road, for example, could serve the mining operation while also providing motorized access for hunting and other recreational pursuits.
- c. Public Access. Mining access roads should serve as public access except when:
  - i. A determination is made by DNR in cooperation with ADF&G that public use would negatively impact wildlife populations.
  - ii. Public access would create public safety or other management problems or adversely impact the mining operation.
- d. Maintenance of Existing Legal Access. If mining operations need to use existing legal public access routes, alternative access shall be provided to the public by the lessee or permittee.
- e. Future Closure. Where access roads are detrimental to wildlife or public recreation, they may be kept closed to the public and removed and rehabilitated when mineral production ends.
- f. Stream Crossings. Authorizations from the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE) and a Fish Habitat Permit from the ADF&G Habitat Section may be required.

### 3. Access for Habitat Enhancement

- a. Upgrading Existing Roads and/or Trails. ADF&G or other agencies should use existing road and/or trail networks whenever possible.
- b. New Access. ADF&G or other agencies shall consult with DNR DMLW on new access routes for habitat enhancement projects. New access should be sited, designed, and maintained to avoid or minimize impacts to fish, wildlife, and their habitats.
- c. Level of Upgrading. Access roads and/or trails constructed in the Moose Range and JPUA for wildlife habitat enhancement projects should be built only to a level necessary for the intended use.
- d. Determination of Public Access. Access roads or trails for habitat enhancement may be closed to public use as needed. The desired public recreational use of access roads intended for habitat enhancement should be determined prior to upgrades. Posting of trail signs or developing trailheads on roads or trails will be limited and mainly done where and when it is necessary to

direct public use away from enhancement efforts, or to direct the public to stay on public trails. DNR DMLW should consult with ADF&G or other agencies proposing habitat enhancement projects to determine if roads and/or trails created through habitat enhancement efforts should remain open to the public. The review may consider effects of the new access on wildlife, habitat enhancement efforts, availability of funding for maintenance, and the public desire to use the roads and/or trails for recreational purposes.

- e. Protection of Existing Legal Access. If habitat enhancement projects need to use existing legal public access routes, and those routes are no longer open to public use during the project, alternative access shall be provided to the public.
- f. Road Requirements. Access for wildlife habitat enhancement projects will:
  - i. Utilize winter road access wherever possible.
  - ii. As appropriate, roads may be located and designed to allow the public to collect firewood and to accommodate recreational use.
- g. Road Buffers. Buffers of naturally occurring vegetation shall be maintained along roads such as the Glenn Highway, Permanente, Fish-Drill Lake, Buffalo Mine, Castle Mountain Mine and Chickaloon River Roads. Ideally, buffers should extend 100 feet from the outer edge of the right-of-way. Activities allowed in road buffers include the following:
  - i. Selective tree cutting as approved by DNR.
  - ii. Disease and insect control and prevention with pesticides as approved by DNR and State of Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC).
  - iii. Roads, trails, and utility lines may cross the buffer.
  - iv. Recreational trails may be located within the buffer.
  - v. Fuels management to reduce wildfire risk.
  - vi. Habitat enhancement activities.

#### 4. Access for Timber Harvest Operations

- a. Upgrading Existing Roads and/or Trails. DOF&FP should use existing road and/or trail networks for timber harvest whenever possible.
- b. New Access. DOF&FP or other agencies shall consult with DNR DMLW on new access routes for timber harvest projects. New access should be sited, designed, and maintained to avoid or minimize impacts to fish, wildlife, and their habitats.
- c. Level of Upgrading. Access roads and/or trails constructed in the Moose Range and JPUA for timber harvest operations should be built only to a level necessary for the intended use.
- d. Determination of Public Access. Access roads or trails for timber harvest operations may be closed to public use as needed. The desired public recreational use of access roads intended for timber harvest should be determined prior to upgrades. Posting of trail signs or developing trailheads on roads or trails will be limited and mainly done where and when it is necessary to direct public use away from timber harvest efforts, or to direct the public to stay on public trails. DNR DMLW should consult with DOF&FP or other agencies proposing timber harvest projects to determine if roads and/or trails created through timber harvests should remain open to the public. The review may consider effects of the new access on wildlife, habitat enhancement

efforts, availability of funding for maintenance, and the public desire to use the roads and/or trails for recreational purposes.

- e. Protection of Existing Legal Access. If timber harvest projects need to use existing legal public access routes, and those routes are no longer open to public use during the project, alternative access shall be provided to the public.
- f. Road Requirements. Timber harvest roads or trails shall meet the requirements in the Forest Resources and Practices Act (FRPA). Additionally, access for timber harvest projects will:
  - i. Utilize winter road access wherever possible.
  - ii. As appropriate, roads will be located and designed to allow the public to collect firewood and to accommodate recreational use.
- g. Road Buffers. To protect habitat, buffers of naturally occurring vegetation shall be maintained along roads such as the Glenn Highway, Permanente, Fish-Drill Lake, Buffalo Mine, Castle Mountain Mine and Chickaloon River Roads. Activities allowed in road buffers include the following:
  - i. Selective tree cutting as approved by DNR.
  - ii. Disease and insect control and prevention with pesticides as approved by DNR and State of Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation.
  - iii. Roads, trails, and utility lines may cross the buffer.
  - iv. Recreational trails may be located within the buffer.
  - v. Fuels management to reduce wildfire risk.
  - vi. Habitat enhancement activities.
- h. Cutting Permits. Personal firewood cutting permits shall specify that no cutting is allowed within buffers.

## 5. Access for Recreation

New trails and roads to promote the enjoyment of the Moose Range and JPUA should be sited, designed, and maintained to avoid or minimize impacts to fish, wildlife, and their habitats.

## 6. Department of Transportation & Public Facilities Roads (DOT&PF)

Development Within DOT&PF Road Rights-of-Way. Any development within the DOT&PF road rights-of-way will require authorization from DOT&PF.

## 7. Protection of Fish and Wildlife Resources

Important wintering, calving, lambing, or mineral lick areas, fish and wildlife habitats in riparian areas, fish and wildlife movement corridors, and threatened or endangered species habitat should be avoided in siting of roads and/or trails unless no other feasible and prudent alternatives exist. Location of routes and timing of construction shall be determined in consultation with ADF&G.

## 8. Public Waters

DNR, ADF&G, and BLM should work cooperatively to ensure access to public lands and waters wherever possible.

## 9. Section Line Easements

Use of section lines for access routes within the range should be discouraged in favor of other routes based on topography, gradient and road standards. Use of section lines for access routes to the Moose Range and JPUA should be secondary to other routes. Section line easements may be used, however, if other routes are unavailable.

# Commercial Recreation Use

## Background

Active commercial recreational use has not yet occurred within the Moose Range and JPUA but should be anticipated in the future. Potential operators could provide a variety of recreational opportunities, including but not limited to hunting, fishing, biking, skiing, hiking, and wildlife viewing. Commercial operators could also provide services such as garbage collection, sanitation, shooting range operation, and overnight camping accommodations.

## Goals

1. Authorize those commercial operations that are consistent with the purposes for which the Moose Range and JPUA were designated as stated in Chapter 1.

## Objectives

Commercial recreation uses in the Moose Range or JPUA should be managed to promote public safety, increase on-site management of high-use areas, and provide additional opportunities for outdoor recreation activities. Commercial use may be considered if the activities are conducted in a manner that does not compromise wildlife or wildlife habitat. Additionally, commercial activities should not detract from the experience of others in the Moose Range and JPUA.

## Management Guidelines

1. DNR may authorize commercial uses. Authorizations for commercial use are subject to the requirements of this management plan.
2. DNR should minimize impacts to public access where commercial uses are authorized.
3. Land use authorizations for permanent or temporary facilities for commercial use shall only be authorized in the Jonesville Management Subunit and are not authorized in the Western, Middle or Eastern Management Subunits. Facilities shall not be issued in locations where sensitive habitats or resources are present.
4. Commercial uses within the Moose Range and JPUA should be conducted in a manner that encourages public recreation and promotes respectful and lawful use of the land.
5. Entities with commercial use authorizations within the Moose Range and JPUA should be responsible in part for the upkeep and maintenance of the recreation amenities.
6. Entities who receive commercial use authorizations may charge appropriate fees for the services they provide.

# Cultural and Heritage Resources

## Background

Archaeological findings in the Moose Range and JPUA regions suggest that indigenous peoples have been living in these areas from at least 7,000 to 300 years ago during a period known as the Middle Holocene. In addition, historic trails and natural corridors in the area were likely used much earlier than their recorded dates for activities such as hunting, gathering, fishing, and trading. The trails traversing the Moose Range and JPUA have been used historically for many years, specifically, the Chickaloon River Trail, the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail, the Boulder Creek Trail, the Old 98 Trail, and several old mining roads. Other resource types recorded within the Moose Range and JPUA include historic mine sites, grave sites, historic structures, and paleontological sites. At present, the Alaska Heritage Resource Survey database identifies 39 total recorded sites within the Moose Range. Of these, 31 are recorded as historic, 4 are prehistoric, and 2 are paleontological. Seven sites have been evaluated for their potential significance under the National Register of Historic Places Criteria (36 CFR 60.4) through the Alaska State Historic Preservation Office (AK SHPO). Of those 7 sites, the O’Neill House located at the Alpine Historical Park is the only property that has been determined to be eligible for the National Register. Several of the mine sites including the Buffalo Mine, the Jonesville Mine, the Eska Mine, the Premier Mine, and the Baxter Mine are reported as lacking historic integrity or destroyed due to cleanup activities. However, many sites have not received a recent condition assessment.

Only a very small portion of Alaska has been surveyed for cultural resources and therefore the possibility remains that previously unidentified resources are located within the Moose Range and JPUA. Surveys conducted just outside of the Moose Range area have identified a high quantity of new sites within the last decade. To date a complete survey of the Moose Range and JPUA has not yet been undertaken. There are other unrecorded resources in the area which are equally important.

The local Alpine Historical Society in Sutton manages the Alpine Historical Park, a facility that provides interpretive information about the heritage and cultures of the early settlers of the area including Ahtna-Dena (Athabascan) culture, coal mining, and the construction of the Glenn Highway.

## Goals

1. Identify and protect significant cultural and heritage resources.
2. Provide educational and interpretive information regarding cultural and heritage resources.

## Objectives

In accordance with the Alaska Historic Preservation Act of 1971 (AS 41.35.010) 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. All proposed land uses and management activities within the Moose Range and JPUA should be reviewed for potential conflicts with cultural resource values.

## Management Guidelines

### 1. Heritage Resource Survey

- a. The Office of History and Archeology (OHA) shall be contacted during the initial planning phase of any project that involves a ground-disturbing activity to determine the appropriate course of action. If a cultural resource survey is required, the survey shall be completed by qualified DNR personnel and/or private cultural resource contractors.
- b. 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 OHA, contingent on funding, 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:
  - i. Research on heritage resources on state land by qualified individuals and organizations.
  - ii. Cooperative efforts for planned surveys and inventories between federal, state, local, and/or Native groups.

### 2. Heritage Resource Protection

Significant heritage resources within the Moose Range and JPUA shall 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 shall provide recommendations to minimize these effects if required by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

### 3. Interpretation

Cultural and historical values may be interpreted to the public through signs, displays, rehabilitation, and other methods where appropriate and as funding is available.

### 4. Recreation Facilities Adjacent to Cultural and Heritage Resources

Recreational facilities that might make heritage sites more susceptible to damage and disturbance because of increased public use shall not be located adjacent to the heritage sites without mitigating measures. OHA should be consulted on all proposed projects for cultural and heritage site location information.

### 5. Reporting of Inadvertent Discoveries

The Alaska Heritage Resources Survey (AHRS) is an inventory of all reported historic and prehistoric sites within the State of Alaska and is maintained by the OHA. Should inadvertent discoveries of previously unknown cultural resources occur within the Moose Range and JPUA, OHA shall be notified to evaluate whether the resources should be preserved in the public interest (as specified at Section 41.35.070[d]). The data received should be provided to the AHRS. The public is also encouraged to report cultural resources they have encountered to help the state better manage these resources.

## 6. Undiscovered Sites

The planning area has been used historically by Alaska Native people. With the extent of past cultural use, it is likely that additional cultural resources may be located. Areas in the Moose Range and JPUA designated by SHPO as known and high potential areas for containing heritage resources should be surveyed for heritage values as funding and staffing allow.

# Fish and Wildlife Habitat and Harvest

## Background

### Fish & Wildlife Habitat

The Moose Range and JPUA supports a variety and abundance of fish and wildlife. Approximately 134 species of birds, 14 species of fish and 28 species of mammals are inhabitants or migrants in the Moose Range and JPUA. The diversity and abundance of fish and wildlife reflect the variety and productivity of available habitats that provide food, cover, water, and reproductive areas for these species. The Moose Range and JPUA habitats include river floodplains, riparian areas, deciduous, coniferous and mixed forests and woodlands, shrublands, grasslands, forb communities, muskegs, rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands and a variety of alpine and tundra plant communities.

Moose, the most abundant large ungulate (hoofed) species found within the Moose Range and JPUA, are year-round residents; their general distribution reaches about 4000 ft. The highest moose densities occur where habitat disturbance resulting from landslides, forest fires, clearing, flooding or timber cutting has created paper birch, willow, and aspen vegetation in an early seral growth stage. Disturbed vegetative habitats produce larger volumes of palatable moose forage, which in turn result in greater seasonal growth and better physical condition of moose.

There is a general distribution of brown and black bear throughout the area, with high brown and black bear occurrences in the eastern third of the Moose Range, some brown bear occurrences in upper drainages and some black bear occurrences in the southcentral section of the Moose Range. The Moose Range supports a general distribution of Dall sheep, with a known important lambing area on Puddingstone Hill. Wolves are known to be in the middle and upper reaches of some drainages.

Beginning in the early 1990s, ruffed grouse were translocated to Southcentral Alaska from populations in Interior Alaska. One of the release locations was within the Moose Range and JPUA. In 1992, ADF&G began spring breeding surveys within the Moose Range and JPUA and the population has continued to grow and expand to now include all of the Moose Range and JPUA as well as much of the Matanuska-Susitna valley. Spruce grouse and snowshoe hare are also highly abundant and popular small game species within the Moose Range and JPUA.

Other wildlife species which inhabit the Moose Range and JPUA include wolverine, mountain goat, caribou, coyote, land otter, fox, marten, beaver, mink, weasel, lynx, hare, red squirrel, porcupine, three species of ptarmigan and spruce grouse. In addition, several important raptors such as the peregrine falcon, gyrfalcon, and bald and golden eagle nest, hunt and/or migrate through the area. Both falcons

and eagles are federally protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty and eagles are covered additionally by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, which apply within the Moose Range and JPUA.

As of 2022 there were three known Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) as identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan within the Moose Range and JPUA including the rusty blackbird (*Euphagus carolinus*), the olive-sided flycatcher (*Contopus cooperi*), and the little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*). The Olive-sided Flycatcher was identified during the North American Breeding Bird Survey, located in the SW corner of the Moose Range, making this area an important habitat for the species.

Migrant and resident fish found within the Moose Range and JPUA include Chinook, coho, chum, pink and sockeye salmon, as well as rainbow trout, Dolly Varden, Arctic grayling, burbot, three-spine stickleback, nine-spine stickleback, and the longnose sucker. The important sport fishing species include coho, sockeye and chum salmon, rainbow trout, Dolly Varden, and Arctic grayling.

#### Fish & Wildlife Harvest

The Moose Range and JPUA are readily accessible from the Glenn Highway, spur roads, and a number of trails. Because of relatively good access, high moose densities, and close proximity to Anchorage and Palmer/Wasilla, the Moose Range and JPUA are very popular for moose hunting. An analysis of returned hunter harvest tickets indicates that during the 2021 general harvest moose season in Unit 14A, 418 hunters spent 2,158 user-days to harvest 41 moose from the Moose Range and JPUA. Sixty-five percent of the general season hunters were from the local area, 35% from Anchorage, and another 5% from other areas. In addition to the general season bull harvest, there were 150 antlerless moose draw permits issued for the area for the fall season; 126 hunters took 53 antlerless moose. There are also two late season antlerless draw permits available in which all of ADF&G Game Management Unit 14A is open for hunting. For these two permits combined, 15 permittees reported hunting in the area, and they took an additional eight antlerless moose. This illustrates the high demand and importance of this land for providing public hunting opportunities near these population centers.

Abundant grouse and hare populations within the Moose Range and JPUA draw considerable hunter densities throughout the year through numerous public access points. Between 2001 and 2013, ADF&G began deliberate annual habitat manipulation efforts for the direct benefit of ruffed grouse and secondarily moose, snowshoe hare, and other early successional species. These projects are just now beginning to yield the planned benefits. The Moose Range and JPUA continue to grow in popularity and accessibility for grouse and hare hunters.

Sport fishing for all species, except Chinook (king) salmon, is permitted in the Range, and the fish populations support considerable recreational use, particularly in stocked lakes.

Although some sport fishing for resident species such as Dolly Varden occurs on streams within the confines of the Moose Range and JPUA, most of the sport fishing effort occurs just outside of the Moose Range and JPUA boundary near each stream's confluence with the Matanuska River. Year-round sport fishing for stocked fish occurs on Wishbone, Seventeen Mile, Slipper, Coyote, and Ruby lakes. Fish Lake supports year-round fishing of a native population of rainbow trout.

The use of the Moose Range and JPUA has increased as the human population has grown and access to adjoining private lands has been restricted, whether the use is by hunters, trappers, wildlife viewers, firewood cutters, anglers, snowmachiners, off-road vehicle users, and/or hikers. In some areas use has become problematic and certain uses should be restricted to protect sensitive habitats for fish and wildlife resources. Within the Moose Range and JPUA, such habitat includes moose wintering range, moose breeding areas, sensitive alpine habitats, Dall sheep lambing areas, riparian lake and stream habitats, stream banks, salmon spawning and rearing habitat (such as upper Wasilla Creek wetland complex) and waterfowl nesting areas.

## Goals

1. Sustain and enhance moose, ruffed grouse, and other wildlife habitats and populations, while enabling public uses like hunting, trapping, fishing, wildlife viewing, and recreation.
2. Habitat enhancement methods should protect environmental values wherever possible.
3. Minimize negative impacts of authorized activities on fish, wildlife, and their habitats.
4. Avoid the introduction of and reduce the spread of invasive plants, exotic animals, and diseases.

## Objectives

In the Moose Range and JPUA, habitat enhancement activities should be given priority over both the goals of timber harvest and the provision of opportunities for public recreation. The location, amount, and type of timber harvested should be determined primarily through consideration of the habitat needs of moose and/or other wildlife and the local needs for forest products. At any given time, large portions of the Moose Range and JPUA will be managed to produce moose forage and ruffed grouse breeding and nesting habitat (willow, aspen, birch, and cottonwood) rather than commercial or personal use forest products and recreation.

The Moose Range has the potential to produce moderate sustained yields of forest products. However, the spruce beetle outbreak beginning in 2016 caused significant white spruce mortality, limiting white spruce timber availability for the next several decades. Timber stands will be needed for moose escape and thermal cover, to act as buffers on trails, roads, and private property, and to provide for personal use firewood. Timber harvests in the near term can focus on beetle-killed spruce. Maintaining some levels of dead trees for cavity nesting birds and other wildlife that rely on standing dead trees for portions of their life cycle should be considered.

While moose habitat enhancement is an overriding goal in the area, it is important that these activities occur in a way that limits their adverse impacts on other wildlife species and other beneficial uses of public lands. Habitat enhancement should be avoided in certain limited areas identified by DNR in consultation with ADF&G. The identified areas will focus on where habitat enhancement activities could be expected to increase negative human-wildlife interactions.

When issuing permits and leases or otherwise authorizing the use or development of state lands, DNR will recognize the requirements of the activity or development and the benefits and adverse impacts it may have to uses and habitat when determining stipulations or measures needed to protect fish and wildlife, or their habitats. When assessing if an authorization may have impacts to fish and wildlife or

their habitats, DNR will consult with ADF&G. The costs of mitigation relative to the benefits to be gained will be considered in the implementation of this policy.

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

## Management Guidelines

### 1. Habitat Enhancement

- a. Enhancement Priorities. Protecting and enhancing moose and grouse habitat shall be given priority.
- b. Habitat Manipulation. Habitat alteration through water control, timber management practices, removal of pollution sources, prescribed fire, or other measures may be used to improve habitat for fish and wildlife species where ADF&G determines that it is beneficial to the species or habitat and DNR determines that it is compatible with other primary uses.
- c. Management of Invasive Species. DNR in cooperation with ADF&G should manage its lands and waters to avoid the introduction of and reduce the spread of invasive and non-native plants and animals, consistent with the requirements of 11 AAC 34.
- d. Burning Near Coal Seams. Habitat enhancement methods which apply burning as a management tool are discouraged in areas with coal seams at or near the surface.

### 2. Fish and Wildlife Habitat

- a. Conserve Fish and Wildlife Habitat. Conserve wildlife habitat, especially special features like standing deadwood, deciduous stands, beaver ponds/waterways, fish bearing waterbodies, naturally occurring mineral licks, raptor nest trees, fish and wildlife breeding and seasonal concentration areas, and transition zones.
- b. Avoid Important Areas. Avoid disturbance/development in fish and wildlife nesting, calving, spawning and other birthing and rearing areas.
- c. Mitigation. Authorized activities should avoid significant adverse effects on fish, wildlife, or their habitats through siting, timing, or other management options. When significant adverse effects cannot be avoided, the impact should be minimized or mitigated. If significant loss of fish or wildlife habitat occurs, the loss should be mitigated, to the extent feasible, by repair, rehabilitation, restoration, or in-kind replacement. DNR will consider requiring replacement with other areas with like resource values or enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat when substantial and irreversible loss of habitat cannot be avoided and shall consult ADF&G to help identify the species affected, the need for replacement or enhancement, and the suggested method for addressing the impact. Replacement with or enhancement of similar habitats of the affected species in the same region is preferable. DNR will consider only those replacement and enhancement techniques that have either been proven to be, or are likely to be, effective and that will result in a benefit to the species impacted by the development. Replacement or enhancement will only be required by DNR if it is determined to be in the best interest of the state either through the Best Interest Finding process AS 38.05.035(e) or permit review process.

Replacement may include structural solutions, such as creating spawning or rearing ponds for salmon, creating wetlands for waterfowl; or non-structural measures, such as research or management of the species affected, legislative or administrative allocation of lands to a long-term level of habitat protection that is sufficiently greater than that which they would otherwise receive, or fire management to increase habitat productivity.

- d. Public Information, Education, and Interpretation. DNR and/or partners may educate the public through information displays and interpretive signs in the Moose Range and JPUA.
- e. Moose Calving Areas. Uses that are likely to produce levels of acoustical or visual disturbance sufficient to disturb calving or post-calving aggregations that cannot be seasonally restricted should not be authorized in moose calving areas. Uses may be authorized in these areas at other times of the year. DNR authorizations should include seasonal restrictions on activities that would produce significant acoustical or visual disturbance during sensitive periods. Calving typically occurs from May through June. Moose calving areas change over time. ADF&G should be consulted prior to issuing an authorization in an area suspected to contain such concentrations to determine the location of calving areas, when activities within these areas should be avoided, and identify appropriate mitigation measures if no feasible or prudent alternative site exists.
- f. Caribou. Impacts to caribou shall be minimized. Surface resource uses such as timber harvests and habitat enhancement should be designed in a manner that minimizes impact on caribou habitat. DNR should consult with ADF&G on the location of these areas to develop appropriate land authorization stipulations.
- g. Dall Sheep. Impacts to Dall sheep shall be minimized. Surface resource uses such as timber harvests and habitat enhancement should be designed in a manner that minimizes impact on Dall sheep habitat. DNR should consult with ADF&G on the location of these areas and to determine appropriate stipulations to apply during the preparation of the timber harvest/habitat enhancement schedules. Disease transmission from domesticated livestock shall be avoided.
- h. Eagles. Authorizations that potentially affect eagles will be consistent with the state and federal Endangered Species Acts and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940 as amended. Applicable standards are drawn from a cooperative agreement signed by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and the USFWS or such subsequent standards that may be promulgated. These standards, however, may not be adequate in all circumstances, and the USFWS may determine that additional measures are necessary. In addition, meeting the guidelines does not absolve the party from the penalty provisions of the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act; therefore, the USFWS should be consulted when activities may affect bald or golden eagles.

The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act ('Eagle Act') prohibits the take of bald and golden eagles, their parts, nests, and eggs either directly (such as by shooting or collecting parts) or indirectly (such as by disturbance or visual changes to the landscape). Under the Eagle Act, "disturb" means to agitate or bother an eagle to a degree that causes or is likely to cause injury, a decrease in productivity, or nest abandonment.

The USFWS has developed spatial and temporal buffers to assist with planning activities and siting facilities to avoid take of eagles. The recommended practices are designed to prevent human disturbance to eagles and their nests, particularly during the nesting season, when eagles are most sensitive to disturbance. If activities cannot be conducted outside the eagle nesting season or the recommended spatial buffers around eagle nests cannot be implemented, an Eagle Take or Eagle Nest Take permit may be needed.

Contact the Alaska Region of the USFWS to obtain: the most current information on nest locations; technical guidance for project activities near eagle nests, including buffer recommendations; and assistance with any necessary permits.

- i. Siting Facilities to Avoid Eagle Nests. Facilities determined by the USFWS to cause significant disturbance to nesting eagles will not be allowed within 330 feet and up to one-half mile of any eagle nest site, whether the nest is currently active or not.
- ii. Activities Disturbing Nesting Eagles. Activities the USFWS determines likely to cause significant disturbance to nesting eagles will be prohibited within 330 feet of active bald eagle nests between March 15 and August 31. Temporary activities and facilities that do not alter eagle-nesting habitat or disturb nesting eagles, as determined by the USFWS, may be allowed at other times.
- i. Peregrine Falcons. Although American peregrine falcons are no longer listed under the federal Endangered Species Act, the USFWS encourages the continued conservation of these species by applying protection measures during the nesting period. In addition, activities that could have negative impacts throughout the year (not only during nesting periods) include habitat alterations, construction of permanent facilities, and pesticide use. The recommended protection measures, as well as technical advice on conducting activities near peregrine falcon nest sites, can be obtained from the Fairbanks Ecological Services office of the USFWS.
- j. Waterfowl. In important waterfowl habitat, disturbance should be avoided during sensitive periods such as nesting, staging, or brood-rearing periods. If it is likely that a waterfowl concentration exists within the area affected by a potential project, consult with ADF&G and USFWS to identify areas of important waterfowl habitat to determine appropriate mitigation or avoidance measures. The USFWS recommends for migratory birds affected by the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Migratory Bird Treaty Reform Act of 2004 that land disturbing activities be conducted before May 1 or after July 15 to avoid disturbing nesting, molting, and fledging birds in forests, woodlands, shrub or open areas.
- k. Anadromous Fisheries. ADF&G should continue to maintain and protect anadromous fisheries including Wasilla, Moose, Eska, Young and Boulder creeks and in Kings and Chickaloon rivers.
- l. Alteration of the Riverine Hydrologic System. To the extent feasible, channelization, diversion, or damming that will alter the natural hydrological conditions and have a significant adverse impact on important riverine habitat will be avoided. If projects like this are proposed, they will require a review and permit from the ADF&G Habitat Section and other agencies.
- m. Protection of Mineral Licks. Mineral licks are used by significant numbers of wildlife primarily during the spring and early summer. Known mineral licks occur in the Moose Range and JPUA. The regular use of these areas suggests that the licks play an important role in the life history of

the animals that use them. These same areas may also have significant mineral reserves. The area around the licks should be protected for their wildlife value. Stipulations should be developed on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with ADF&G, for authorizations. The stipulations should address the following: 1) the avoidance of direct and indirect impact on the mineral licks, the animal tracks leading to them and other areas of concentrated animal use that is associated with the mineral lick; 2) the method and routing of mining-related access to these areas. Consult with ADF&G for their specific locations.

- n. Threatened and Endangered Species. All land use activities will be conducted consistent with state and federal Endangered Species Acts to avoid jeopardizing the continued existence of threatened or endangered species of animals or plants, to provide for their continued use of an area, and to avoid modification or destruction of their habitat. Specific mitigation recommendations should be identified through interagency consultation for any activity that potentially affects threatened or endangered species. There are no known threatened or endangered species under either federal or state statute or regulation within the planning area. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Division of Ecological Services, should be consulted on questions that involve endangered or threatened species of federal interest and those listed by the state.

Consideration should also be given to wildlife listed by the state within the State Wildlife Action Plan as Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) which are species whose populations are declining or under threat, species that are culturally, ecologically, or economically important in the state, species for which the majority of their range occurs in Alaska, or species that are indicators of environmental change. Location of species and mitigation should be determined in consultation with ADF&G during project reviews. As of 2022 there were three known SGCN identified within the Moose Range and JPUA including the rusty blackbird (*Euphagus carolinus*), the olive-sided flycatcher (*Contopus cooperi*), and the little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*). The olive-sided flycatcher was identified during the North American Breeding Bird Survey, located in the SW corner of the Moose Range, making this area an important habitat for the species.

## Forestry

### Background

The forests in the Moose Range and JPUA consist of mixed spruce forest. Areas below 1,000 feet in elevation are covered by a mixed forest of paper birch, quaking aspen, and white spruce. Areas between 1,000 and 1,500 feet in elevation are typically covered by a mixed forest but may contain areas of almost-pure stands of aspen, birch, spruce, or cottonwood. Areas above 1,500 feet in elevation are broken into fingers with open grasslands or shrublands between stands of trees. The forested areas consist primarily of pure stands of white spruce, cottonwood, aspen and sometimes birch. They will be bordered by willow or alder, which in turn is generally bordered by alpine tundra or grass.

The forest resource, although providing valuable moose habitat, could provide more valuable habitat than it is providing at present. Forest management could augment the availability of forage.

The Southcentral spruce beetle outbreak that began in 2016 severely impacted the Matanuska and Susitna valleys, including this area, limiting the availability of white spruce available for harvest in the future. The spruce mortality was extensive, and a significant portion of the dead trees contain increased incidents of decay fungi, limiting the potential uses.

Timber harvest has occurred occasionally in the Moose Range and JPUA since the 1980s. The locations of timber harvest are limited because of access and market demand. DOF&FP timber sales are identified in the Five-Year Schedule of Timber Sales, issued every two years and available on the DOF&FP website.

Resource development, like opening of material sites, road construction, and mineral development, may create additional areas in which timber harvest should be encouraged to utilize the resource prior to development.

## Goals

1. Harvest timber in a manner that maintains or enhances moose and ruffed grouse habitat and moose populations, while simultaneously making timber available to meet public demands for fuelwood and, to a lesser extent, for house logs and sawtimber.
2. Timber harvest methods should protect environmental values wherever possible.
3. Support DOF&FP to manage forested lands consistent with their mission and authorities.
4. Minimize negative impacts of authorized activities on fish, wildlife, and their habitats.
5. Minimize the threat of wildland fires to nearby communities.
6. Improve forest health and habitat by making forest lands in the Moose Range and JPUA available for carbon offset projects.

## Objectives

In the Moose Range and JPUA, timber harvest projects are secondary to habitat enhancement activities and public recreation. The location, amount and type of timber harvested should be determined primarily through consideration of the habitat needs of moose and/or other wildlife and the local needs for forest products. At any given time, large portions of the Moose Range and JPUA will be managed to produce moose forage and ruffed grouse breeding and nesting habitat (willow, aspen, birch, and cottonwood) rather than commercial or personal use forest products and recreation. If timber sales are considered, the primary outcome of the sale must be habitat enhancement.

The Moose Range and JPUA have the potential to produce moderate sustained yields of forest products. However, the spruce beetle outbreak beginning in 2016 caused significant white spruce mortality, limiting white spruce timber availability for the next several decades. Timber stands will be needed for moose escape and thermal cover, to act as buffers on trails, roads, and private property, and to provide for personal use firewood. Timber harvests in the near term can focus on beetle-killed spruce. Maintaining some levels of dead trees for cavity nesting birds and other wildlife that rely on standing dead trees for portions of their life cycle should be considered.

## Management Guidelines

### 1. Timber Harvest

- a. Timber Harvest. The DOF&FP may authorize timber removal for such administrative purposes as timber sales, timber salvage, habitat manipulation, fuels management, forest health protection, or other purposes as determined appropriate by the implementing agency. Projects shall be implemented in coordination with DNR and ADF&G. However, only timber harvest operations that enhance fish and wildlife habitat will be authorized in the Moose Range and JPUA.
- b. Wildlife Habitat. Forest management can be an important tool for improving wildlife habitat. DOF&FP will consult with ADF&G's local biologist during the planning stage of timber harvest layout and in the preparation of the Forest Land Use Plan to receive guidance on wildlife habitat enhancement opportunities. Trees and vegetation may be manipulated by cutting, crushing, harvesting, or burning to provide or improve wildlife habitat.
- c. Timber harvest operations will be conducted in accordance with the stipulations in the Forest Land Use Plan, the Five-Year Schedule of Timber Sales, the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act (AS 41.17 & 11 AAC 95), the Alaska Land Act (AS 38.05 & 11 AAC 71), and other pertinent state guidelines and laws. The Forest Practices Act provides statewide policy and regulatory authority for managing forestry related activities. The specific layout and other site-specific requirements of a timber sale are addressed through a Forest Land Use Plan (FLUP), which is prepared prior to any commercial timber harvest or sale that is greater than ten acres in size (AS 38.05.112). FLUPs developed for timber sale or harvests in the planning area are to be consistent with the Forestry Management Guidelines of this Chapter. FLUPs shall consider, in their preparation, the sensitive resources and wildlife, or any other significant factors, identified in the Management Guidelines for specific subunits as identified in Chapter 3 of this plan.
- d. Elevation Restrictions. Timber harvests should generally be restricted to areas below the 1,100-foot contour on Arkose Ridge and the 2,000-foot contour below Castle Mountain.
- e. Burning Near Coal Seams. Habitat enhancement methods that prescribe burning as a management tool are discouraged in areas with coal seams at or near the surface.
- f. Personal Use Wood Harvest. When forested lands are available near communities and where personal use harvest is consistent with other purposes for which the land is being managed, DOF&FP may provide wood products for personal use. This program will only be undertaken, however, if it can be effectively and efficiently administered by DOF&FP.

### 2. Leasing for Carbon Management Purposes

DNR may lease land for carbon management purposes under AS 38.05.081 if consistent with the enabling legislation of the Moose Range and JPUA and if the project area is of a size that does not diminish the legislative intent for the area. Lands authorized for this purpose shall continue to be accessible to the public for their use and enjoyment. ADF&G shall be consulted to minimize and address any potential negative impacts to fish, wildlife, or their habitat within the planning area.

# Grazing

## Background

Active grazing has not occurred within the Moose Range in many years. There are currently no active grazing authorizations within the boundary of the Moose Range or JPUA.

## Goals

1. Preserve the integrity of the Moose Range and JPUA ecosystem primarily for wildlife habitat.
2. Consider opportunities for grazing that do not impact fish, wildlife, or their habitats.

## Objectives

There is significant concern that diseases from domesticated and urban wildlife, particularly livestock, will harm moose and wild sheep in the Moose Range and JPUA. Additional concerns include competition for resources, vegetation and water quality damage, and genetic pollution (sheep). Grazing may only be considered in non-alpine areas of the Moose Range and JPUA if the activity does not negatively impact or conflict with fish, wildlife, or their habitats per consultation with ADF&G.

## Management Guidelines

### 1. Authorization Requirements

Grazing in the Moose Range and JPUA may be authorized in consultation with ADF&G only if the activity does not conflict with the enabling legislation and the Moose Range and JPUA Management Plan. Any grazing proposals will follow normal DNR procedures. Grazing shall not be authorized if the proposals have negative impacts on outdoor recreation, wetlands, creeks, fish, wildlife, or their habitats per consultation with ADF&G. Grazing shall not be authorized in alpine areas.

# Material Sources

## Background

The Matanuska River and its tributaries may contain an abundance of materials. The materials deposited by water are generally well-sorted beds with particle size ranging from sand and gravel to rock and cobble. The glacial deposits are often undifferentiated with particles of all sizes, often including fine particles (silt and clay) found together. Lower Granite Creek has a large deposit located on private lands. Other private lands along Murphy Road, west of Sutton and near Drill Lake all contain deposits of construction materials.

## Goals

1. Utilize materials (aggregate, riprap, railroad ballast, road ballast, road metal, peat, silt, loam, sand, gravel, stone, pumice, common clay, limestone, slate, and any other substances from the ground that are not considered locatable minerals) within the Moose Range and JPUA in a manner which does not adversely affect fish and wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities.

## Objectives

It is expected that there will be demand for materials for Glenn Highway improvements, logging or mining roads, trail maintenance, and local use. Proposed uses will need to be consistent with the following guidelines.

## Management Guidelines

The following management guidelines should be considered by the state when considering designating material sites and when adjudicating material contract or sales requests at sites already designated.

### 1. Location of Materials Sources

- a. Material Extraction for Public Recreation Projects Within the Moose Range and JPUA. Materials may be extracted for public recreation projects that benefit the Moose Range and JPUA, enhance public safety, and are consistent with the purposes of the Moose Range and JPUA. Material sites for public recreation projects within the Moose Range and JPUA will be considered by DNR through a Best Interest Finding as directed by AS 38.05.035(e). DNR shall consult with ADF&G.
- b. Material Site Designation. The extraction of materials from the planning area is discouraged unless there is no feasible alternative. If a material site within the planning area is needed for projects near the Moose Range and JPUA, the site should be considered for designation by DNR through a Best Interest Finding as directed by AS 38.05.035(e).
- c. Preferred Order. Proposed material sources within the planning area may be considered in the following order:
  - i. Upland areas of the Moose Range and JPUA.
  - ii. Inactive floodplain sites in the Moose Range and JPUA.
  - iii. Active floodplain sites in the Moose Range and JPUA.
- d. The public and agencies are encouraged to seek the most preferred material source that is both economic and feasible.
- e. Floodplain Sites. Floodplain sites within the Moose Range and JPUA may become a preferred material source, in concurrence with ADF&G.
- f. Designated Material Sites Within Water Sources. Proposed material site designations located within stream, lake, or wetland buffers may be considered on a case-by-case basis in consultation with ADF&G, USACOE, and DEC.
- g. Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina and Chickaloon River Trails. Material site designations may not be located within the buffer of the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina and Chickaloon River Trails except for the purpose of maintaining the trail. If a material site is designated for trail maintenance the site shall not be visible from the trail.
- h. Material Extraction. If a site is designated, materials can be sold or conveyed as provided in AS 38.05.550 – 38.05.565.

### 2. Screening

A natural, topographic or embankment screen sufficient to shield the material sites and equipment from the view of motorists traveling along the Glenn Highway, Buffalo Mine Road, Jonesville Mine Road, and

Chickaloon River Road should be maintained. Where this level of screening is not prudent and/or feasible, project specific screening to the maximum extent possible will be required.

### 3. Access

The cleared area for an access road to a material site will be limited to the minimum necessary for clear sightlines and site operations. Other authorizations for the purpose of access may be required.

### 4. Stream Crossings

Authorizations from USACOE and a Fish Habitat Permit from the ADF&G Habitat Section may be required.

### 5. Vegetation Removal

- a. Utilization of Timber. If there is sufficient volume, standing timber in areas to be excavated for a material site or access road should be offered to the public.
- b. Vegetation may be stripped no more than one year before pit development. The area of vegetation removal will be for the immediate areas of the excavation, access, sites for overburden storage, material stockpiles and equipment.

### 6. Site Reclamation

Reclamation of Closed Sites. Once a site is depleted, it should be revegetated with plant species primarily beneficial to moose and approved by ADF&G.

### 7. Waterbodies and Riparian Habitat

- a. Waterbody Requirements. There shall be no gravel removed below the active water table or within 50 feet of a waterbody unless material extraction is part of a fishery enhancement project. Fifty feet is a minimum; a greater distance may be specified where necessary due to site conditions. Vegetation will not be disturbed within this buffer zone unless approved by ADF&G.
- b. Shallow, Even Removal. Gravel shall be removed in shallow, even lifts so as not to create any pits or depressions which could entrap fish after periods of high water.
- c. ADF&G Guidelines. Material sites used for fisheries enhancement will be done in accordance with ADF&G criteria for the evaluation of new stocking projects and prioritizing active projects.

### 8. Public Review

Subject to Public Review. Public notice is required for designating material sites.

### 9. Blasting Activities

Applications that include blasting activities within the Moose Range and JPUA may be considered on a case-by-case basis. Rock quarry operations will be subject to the applicable guidelines in this chapter and other mitigating factors as determined by DNR.

# Public Use Sites

## Background

Public Use Sites are sites 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, typically see a higher concentration of public use, and should receive a higher degree of management attention.

## Goals

1. Identify areas that have high public use and actively manage them to minimize user conflicts, ensure public safety, and enhance their recreation values.

## Objectives

Public Use Sites may have a higher level of facility development, management, and enforcement presence than other areas in the Moose Range and JPUA. Public Use Sites may include regulations that, in some cases, are more restrictive than Generally Allowed Uses of State Land including but not limited to camping restrictions and prohibiting the discharge of weapons.

## Management Guidelines

1. **Public Use Sites**
  - a. The following Public Use Sites are designated in the plan: Slipper Lake, Eska Falls, and Wishbone Lake. See Map 7 in Chapter 3 (page 3-25).
  - b. Improvements such as public recreational facilities, docks, and boat ramps are encouraged in Public Use Sites.
  - c. Within a Public Use Site camping may be restricted to a campground, identified campsites, or within a certain distance of a developed recreation facility when developed<sup>1</sup>.
  - d. To protect public safety, DNR may restrict the use and discharge of weapons (including for hunting and trapping) in Public Use Sites, or within a certain distance from a developed facility.<sup>2</sup>
  - e. DNR may allow target shooting within a Public Use Site only within a designated and managed shooting area.

# Recreation

## Background

The lands now designated as the Moose Range and JPUA have been used by the public for dispersed recreational activities for years. The recreational land base of the area is extensive, including several large river valleys and small streams traversing diverse vegetation, geological and wildlife habitat types. The outstanding mountain scenery and scenic views of Castle Mountain and Granite Peak are some of the many valuable and scenic recreational resources.

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<sup>1</sup> This management guideline will require the promulgation of regulations for implementation.

<sup>2</sup> This management guideline will require the promulgation of regulations for implementation.

The wildlife in the Moose Range and JPUA make the area popular for hunting of moose, black and brown bear, Dall sheep, snowshoe hare, ruffed and spruce grouse, and ptarmigan; trapping of a variety of furbearers; and wildlife viewing. Fishing for salmon, Dolly Varden and rainbow trout is popular in the streams. Dolly Varden, grayling and/or rainbow trout are also caught in Seventeen Mile, Wishbone, Fish and Chain Lakes.

Hiking, biking, horseback riding, cross country skiing, climbing, and snowmachining extend into the most remote areas of the Moose Range and JPUA. Off-road vehicle use is common on Permanente Road, Buffalo Mine Road, old mining roads near Sutton and along Boulder Creek, as well as on trails off Wendt Road, Murphy Road, and East Yarrow Road. Whitewater kayaking and rafting is popular on the Chickaloon River. Kings River and Moose Creek both have potential for expert level kayaking. Fossil viewing and rock collecting are popular along Moose Creek, the north side of Wishbone Hill, Chickaloon River and Boulder Creek. Recreational gold panning and dog mushing also occur along the Chickaloon River.

These dispersed activities generally occur along the existing complex network of trails within the Moose Range and JPUA. The JPUA Management Subunit sees the highest concentration of recreational use and user conflicts and is discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

The most popular trails are the Permanente Road Trail, the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail, the Chickaloon River Trail, the Boulder Creek Trail, and the Young Creek trails. Several old mining roads between Moose Creek and Seventeen Mile Lake are used frequently as trails. For more information about trails see the Trails section on page 2-38.

## Goals

1. Provide opportunities for dispersed public recreation.
2. Manage public recreational use so that the level and type of use does not adversely affect moose populations and habitat.
3. Develop recreational facilities in high concentration areas that reduce user conflict and improve public safety.
4. Complete a Trails Management Plan.
5. Provide funding necessary for the development and maintenance of facilities and their management.
6. Provide funding necessary for staff to enforce the regulations that result from this management plan.

## Objectives

The Moose Range and JPUA will be managed to provide dispersed public recreation activities for multiple uses to the extent this does not cause significant conflicts with the overall goal of supporting moose, fish, and other wildlife populations and habitat. Facility development should only be authorized in areas where there is concentrated use, will improve public safety, will reduce user conflicts, and/or prevent impacts to fish, wildlife, and their habitat.

## Management Guidelines

### 1. Public Recreation Facility Development

- a. Location of Facilities. Development of recreational facilities on state lands should be limited to areas near the edge of the Moose Range and JPUA or in areas where there is a high concentration of use. Chapter 3 of the management plan provides specific guidance for facilities in each management subunit. The purpose of these developments is to provide for camping facilities, resource protection, wayfinding, habitat protection, and to provide parking and access. The management intent is to direct public use to developed facilities and specific locations while limiting the amount of development within the majority of the Moose Range and JPUA. Facilities should be developed at major access points where use or access can be enhanced or where the presence of facilities may decrease impacts to fish, wildlife, and their habitats.
- b. Trailhead Facilities. Trailhead facilities should be located within the Moose Range and JPUA (or on an authorized site) at the beginning of major trails that serve as key access points. Parking, wayfinding and informational signage, restrooms, and interpretative signage may be provided as appropriate.
- c. Expansion and New Development. Expansion of existing facilities or development of new recreation sites should be based on public demand and use patterns, as well as funding and staffing constraints.
- d. Priorities for Upgrading Established Sites. There is already a concentration of recreational use occurring along the Glenn Highway. Therefore, upgrading existing recreational facilities should be a high priority along the Glenn Highway to meet current and projected recreational demand. Existing public facilities for overnight camping should be upgraded and improved as appropriate (managed by DNR Division of Parks & Outdoor Recreation (DPOR) and other partner agencies) at Long Lake, King Mountain, and Moose Creek campgrounds, DNR land that is seasonally managed, improved, and maintained by Chickaloon Village Traditional Council.
- e. New Overnight Camping Facilities. New facilities should be developed for overnight camping at Slipper Lake (see page 3-26 for more details).
- f. Shooting Ranges. To improve public safety, shooting areas with specified hours/days of operation may 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. An accessible, year-round location is preferred. Shooting ranges authorized in the Moose Range and JPUA will be operated and maintained according to best management practices.
- g. Coordination with Coal Lessee. Facilities should be developed in areas with low potential for future mineral extraction activities, therefore, coordination with lessee is required.

### 2. Commercial Recreational and Non-Commercial Recreational Facility Development

- a. Commercial. Commercial recreational facility developments will not be authorized on state land within the Western, Middle, or Eastern Management Subunits due to the potential impacts on wildlife habitat enhancement objectives. See Chapter 3 for commercial recreational facility development guidelines for the Jonesville Management Subunit (page 3-15). Applications for commercial recreational purposes (in conjunction with a development located on non-state

land) will be reviewed and require interagency coordination with ADF&G and approval by DNR. Authorization should be issued only if the activity is found to be consistent with the Moose Range and JPUA Management Plan.

- b. Non-commercial. Non-commercial recreational developments may be considered. These developments must be for the public benefit and be consistent with the intent of the management plan and enabling legislation. Non-commercial developments require DNR and ADF&G approval.

### 3. Public Safety

- a. Discharge of Weapons. The use and discharge of weapons, except if conducting lawful hunting and trapping, may be restricted range wide and limited to designated shooting areas only. DNR may also restrict the use and discharge of weapons for hunting and trapping in Public Use Sites near developed facilities like campgrounds, etc. (See Public Use Site Guideline on page 2-25)<sup>3</sup>.
- b. No Facilities in Hazard Areas. Many of the creeks and rivers in the Moose Range are subject to flooding and steep mountainous areas are subject to avalanches. Site selection and design of any new recreation facilities should be located to avoid flood and avalanche hazards.
- c. Enhancement Near Facilities. Habitat enhancement activities around campgrounds or picnic areas will be conducted with public safety in mind and designed to avoid attracting potentially hazardous wildlife or causing wildlife-human conflicts.
- d. Litter and Hazardous Waste Materials.
  - i. Sanitary and bear resistant waste disposal facilities should be developed in areas of concentrated use such as parking and camping areas.
  - ii. DNR should work with appropriate federal, state, or local agencies to identify and address violations of environmental laws and regulations.
- e. DNR and Law Enforcement Presence. DNR and law enforcement presence should be increased in the Moose Range and JPUA. Regulations should be drafted as necessary to implement the plan and manage state resources.
  - i. Initiate and continue DNR field presence in the Moose Range and JPUA.
  - ii. Work with the Department of Public Safety to enforce state statutes and regulations.
  - iii. Work closely with users of the Moose Range and JPUA to obtain information on violations of local, state, and federal laws and regulations.
  - iv. Coordinate where appropriate with the MSB and Chickaloon Native Village.

### 4. Information and Education

- a. Displays. To educate the public about the Moose Range and JPUA, informational displays may be developed in camping, picnicking, and trailhead facilities servicing the Moose Range and JPUA. These displays may include an explanation of the legal access, illegal activities and their consequences on the public area (with number to report violations), public natural resource values, recreational opportunities, wildlife habitat enhancement efforts and the multiple use concept being used to manage the Moose Range and JPUA, wildlife viewing opportunities,

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<sup>3</sup> This management guideline will require the promulgation of regulations for implementation.

unique ecosystems and geological features and natural hazards in the Range. ADF&G and DNR shall jointly develop the wording of informational signs.

- b. Brochures. To educate the public about the above-listed topics, informational brochures may be prepared by ADF&G, DNR, and the MSB. DNR in consultation with ADF&G should develop the wording of informational brochures.

## 5. Management of Recreational Uses

In areas where recreational use may cause significant adverse effects on fish and wildlife populations and their habitats, site-specific restrictions on recreational activities may be necessary. Areas that are particularly sensitive to recreational activity may require restrictions on use. These areas may include, but are not limited to, areas identified by ADF&G with habitat enhancement projects, habitat critical for fish and wildlife, or areas where recreational activities have devalued fish and wildlife resources. Any restrictions will require interagency review.

## 6. Recreational Management on Non-State Land

- a. Borough Involvement. The recreational needs of local communities should, in part, be provided for by the MSB. DNR should work with the MSB to ensure that the demand for recreational opportunities is met on either state, borough, or other land where appropriate. Both Sutton and Chickaloon communities have recreational needs which could be met using borough lands within or adjacent to the Moose Range and JPUA. The borough is encouraged to consult with DNR and ADF&G prior to the development or dedication of a recreational area within the Moose Range and JPUA boundary.
- b. Private Citizen Involvement. DNR encourages the borough to undertake a program with local landowners to promote voluntary protection of visual quality on private lands. Such a program might include restrictions on removal of vegetation and incentives to remove junk cars and similar refuse.

## 7. Trails, Access, and Management of Off-Road Vehicle Use

- a. Trails Management Plan. DNR will develop a Trails Management Plan (TMP) to identify existing trails, identify opportunities for new trails and trailheads, create standards for trail types, trail management, and develop regulations if necessary to minimize adverse impacts.
- b. The TMP should identify opportunities to develop new trails within the planning area to maintain or enhance motorized and non-motorized use. These trails should be developed consistent with the following guidelines:
  - i. New trails within the planning area will be developed as sustainable trails, be consistent with the management strategy of dispersed recreation, be sited to avoid sensitive areas and be designed to minimize impacts to fish and wildlife and their habitats.
  - ii. If new facilities or trails cannot avoid sensitive areas including waterfowl nesting habitat, fish spawning and rearing areas, moose calving concentration areas, or bird nesting areas, they should be designed and developed to minimize adverse impacts to these resources.
  - iii. New facilities or trails that cannot avoid or minimize adverse impacts to sensitive areas may not be approved.

- c. DNR will consult with ADF&G to identify any sensitive habitats and shall provide management guidelines and recommendations that will avoid or minimize impacts to these habitats.
- d. Routes suitable for Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV) that traverse uplands, use hardened stream crossings, and avoid sensitive wetlands should be identified.
- e. The TMP should also identify trails that are unsustainable and/or are causing resource damage and identify recommendations for decommissioning or revegetating.

## Subsurface Resources

### Background

A portion of the Matanuska Coal Field lies within the Matanuska Valley Moose Range and JPUA. The coal field, as delineated by the Alaska Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys, lies in a band approximately 42 miles long and 6 miles wide on the north side of the Matanuska River. This band of coal also extends outside of the Moose Range and JPUA, south of the Matanuska River and east of the Moose Range and JPUA boundary. The coal fields are specifically described as Townships 19 through 21 North, Ranges 2 through 8 East, Seward Meridian.

The Alaska Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys has determined that approximately 75,000 acres of the Matanuska Coal Field within the Moose Range and JPUA has moderate-to-high potential for coal development. That is slightly more than half of the total of 132,500 acres in the Moose Range and JPUA. The land was consequently designated 'competitive' for leasing purposes. Currently, there are ten existing state coal leases, encompassing approximately 8,383 acres, in the Moose Range and JPUA. Commercial development of the field is possible (see Map 3 on page 2-33).

In the Moose Range and JPUA, it is estimated that at least 100 million tons of coal are present, of which 32.5 to 60 million tons are potentially able to be mined. The coal deposits are located in the 3,000-foot thick Chickaloon Formation, a Paleocene sequence composed of claystones, siltstones, sandstones, and conglomerates. There are up to 30 coal beds within the upper half of the formation ranging from several inches to more than 10 feet thick.

The Chickaloon Formation is overlain by the Wishbone and Tsadaka Formations, up to 1,800 and 450 feet thick, respectively. The Chickaloon Formation is exposed on the limbs of a syncline whose axis runs along the center of Wishbone Hill.

Limestone and haydite sources are also known to be present in the Range (haydite is used to make strong, yet lightweight, concrete). Placer deposits do exist, though in limited amounts. There are limited oil and gas resources in the Range.

The coal in the Moose Range and JPUA is among the highest quality found in Alaska. This coal compares favorably with that found in the Lower 48 and the interior of Alaska. The Matanuska coal field is among the smallest in Alaska, and by itself could not sustain long-term, large-scale production for export. However, because of the high quality of coal, access to transportation facilities, and the high value of bituminous coals in the Moose Range when compared to the sub-bituminous coal produced in the interior, mining is possible.

There are a variety of scenarios that could occur regarding the Matanuska coal in the Moose Range and JPUA. However, evaluation is difficult because it is impossible to predict the exact future of coal development due to coal's direct dependence on the world marketplace. To focus on one development would be misleading. Because of the quality and quantity of coal resources, it is necessary to visualize the Matanuska Valley Moose Range and JPUA encompassing a variety of coal development at different levels in the future.

Under favorable conditions, a coal lease within the Moose Range and JPUA may be brought into production in six to ten years. Coal leases exist, however currently in 2023, market conditions are not favorable. The market for Alaskan coal could be much stronger in the future.

## Goals

1. Allow and encourage development of coal and other subsurface resources.
2. Reduce the adverse impacts of coal development on environmental and habitat values in the Range through compliance with the provision of the Alaska Surface Coal Mine Control and Reclamation Act (ASCMCRA) (AS 27.21) and other applicable state, federal, and local laws and specific plan guidelines.
3. Assure that mined lands are reclaimed as wildlife habitat, primarily beneficial to moose.

## Objectives

All land within the Moose Range and JPUA is open to mineral exploration and development except for the southern face of Castle Mountain and certain small areas around specific mineral licks. The southern face of Castle Mountain is closed to locatable mineral entry and is not available for mineral leasing. Mineral licks are closed to locatable mineral entry.

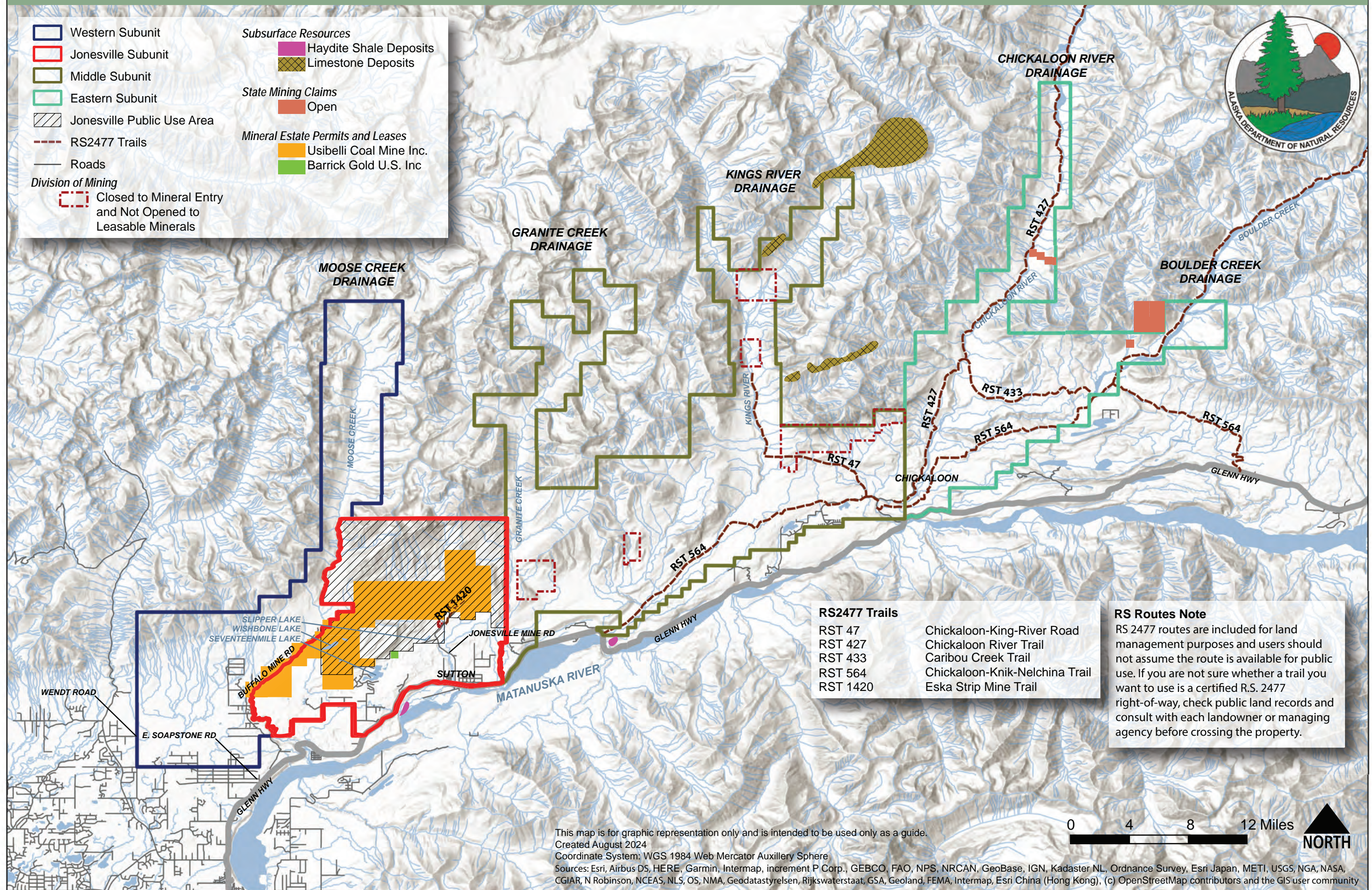
Coal leases offered within the Moose Range and JPUA were in response to industry interest. Please see Map 3 (page 2-33) exhibiting current coal leases and permitted mines. DNR should avoid authorizing recreation or other facilities within coal lease boundaries. Reclamation plans for mines provide an opportunity to enhance moose habitat and provide additional recreational opportunities.

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**PLANNING AREA: MATANUSKA VALLEY MOOSE RANGE & JONESVILLE PUBLIC USE AREA - MINING CLAIMS AND MINERAL LEASES MAP 3**



Western Subunit	<b>Subsurface Resources</b>
Jonesville Subunit	Haydite Shale Deposits
Middle Subunit	Limestone Deposits
Eastern Subunit	<b>State Mining Claims</b>
Jonesville Public Use Area	Open
RS2477 Trails	<b>Mineral Estate Permits and Leases</b>
Roads	Usibelli Coal Mine Inc.
<b>Division of Mining</b>	Barrick Gold U.S. Inc.
Closed to Mineral Entry and Not Opened to Leasable Minerals	



**RS2477 Trails**

RST 47	Chickaloon-King-River Road
RST 427	Chickaloon River Trail
RST 433	Caribou Creek Trail
RST 564	Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail
RST 1420	Eska Strip Mine Trail

**RS Routes Note**  
 RS 2477 routes are included for land management purposes and users should not assume the route is available for public use. If you are not sure whether a trail you want to use is a certified R.S. 2477 right-of-way, check public land records and consult with each landowner or managing agency before crossing the property.

This map is for graphic representation only and is intended to be used only as a guide.  
 Created August 2024  
 Coordinate System: WGS 1984 Web Mercator Auxillary Sphere  
 Sources: Esri, Airbus DS, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodastystrelsen, Rijkswaterstaat, GSA, Geoland, FEMA, Intermap, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors and the GIS user community



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## Management Guidelines

### 1. Coal

- a. Process for Coal Development. Approval of coal exploration, development and mining activities shall be consistent with the Alaska Surface Coal Mining Control and Reclamation Act (ASCMCRA) and its implementing regulations, with interagency agreements, and with guidelines developed in the SMAP and this plan. As outlined in ASCMCRA, surface coal mining activities are controlled by issuance of a surface coal mining permit after a thorough technical review of the application by state agencies. The surface mining permit is the principal mechanism for reducing the potential adverse impacts of coal development. It includes an operation and reclamation plan designed to protect environmental resources such as wildlife habitat, air quality and water quality and to ensure concurrent reclamation for a specified post-mining land use.
- b. Post-Mining Land Use. Within the Moose Range and JPUA, the post-mining land use is designated as wildlife habitat. Reclamation must be directed to a habitat type and density which is primarily beneficial to moose consistent with ASCMCRA.

### 2. Locatable Minerals (Gold, Chemical Grade Limestone) and Other Leasable Minerals (Oil and Gas)

- a. Best Management Practices. Best management practices shall be considered when ADF&G makes recommendations for the rejection or modification of a miscellaneous land use permit or a plan of operations for placer mining.
- b. Mineral Development. Mineral development will follow existing established DNR procedures and include interagency review of the following:
  - i. Development plan and schedule.
  - ii. Operation plan.
  - iii. Access plan.
  - iv. Impact assessment on fish and wildlife, their habitat, and related uses.
  - v. Impact assessment on scenic values.
  - vi. Proposed mitigation and wildlife habitat rehabilitation.
- c. Removal of Vegetation. The area of vegetation removal should be for the immediate areas of the excavations, sites for overburden storage, settling ponds, access roads, equipment storage and necessary structures within the mine or drilling site. This must be outlined in the plan of operations or application for a miscellaneous land use permit.
- d. Mine or Drilling Site Consultation. An on-site, predevelopment conference between the mine operator, DNR, ADF&G, and DEC officials will be held when staff and budget allow. The intent is to assist the mine operator in developing the operation in a manner which will promote compatibility with wildlife and habitat enhancement in the vicinity of the mine or drilling site.
- e. Rehabilitation of Mining Sites. Reclamation plans will be required for mining activities authorized by a miscellaneous land use permit or a plan of operations. Mining sites will be rehabilitated and revegetated to a plant species for habitat primarily beneficial to moose as approved by ADF&G. Reclamation may include soil remediation. Disturbed acreage should be kept to a minimum and reclaimed as phases of the mine operations are completed unless this is not feasible or prudent. ADF&G and DOA's Plant Materials Center should be consulted as to

types of vegetation most conducive for returning the mined area to a state of wildlife productivity and/or design of contours to best benefit fish and wildlife. Rehabilitation plans should be approved by ADF&G and DNR. The expense of the rehabilitation will be borne by the developer of the mining site.

- f. Miscellaneous Land Use Permits. Prior to issuance of any Miscellaneous Land Use Permit within the Moose Range and JPUA, ADF&G should provide comments to DNR on the consistency of the proposed action with the approved Moose Range and JPUA Management Plan. DNR will include in Miscellaneous Land Use Permits those stipulations recommended by ADF&G that are necessary to provide adequate protection for fish and wildlife and their habitats consistent with the Moose Range and JPUA enabling legislation.
- g. Oil and Gas. The state Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys has determined that the potential for oil and gas in the entire Moose Range and JPUA is low to no potential. Oil and gas exploration and development in the Moose Range and JPUA may be permitted if development does not conflict with the enabling legislation and the Moose Range and JPUA Management Plan. Any proposals for development shall follow normal DNR procedures in consultation with ADF&G.

### 3. Areas Closed to Mineral Location and Development

- a. Castle Mountain Face. The southern face of Castle Mountain is closed to locatable mineral entry and will not be made available for the exploration or development of leasable minerals (see Map 3, page 2-33). Legal Description for Castle Mountain Mineral Closing Order:

T20N, R5E, S.M., Sec. 12, SW1/4, N1/2SE1/4, N1/2S1/2SE1/4,  
N1/2S1/2S1/2SE1/4.

Sec. 13 NW1/4NW1/4.

Sec. 14 N1/2, NW1/4SW1/4, N1/2SW1/4SW1/4, N1/2S1/2SW1/4SW1/4.

Sec. 15 N1/2, N1/2S1/2, N1/2S1/2S1/2, N1/2S1/2S1/2S1/2.

Sec. 16 N1/2, SW1/4, N1/2SE1/4, N1/2S1/2SE1/4, N1/2S1/2S1/2SE1/4,

Sec. 21 N1/2NW1/4, N1/2S1/2NW1/4, SW1/4SE1/4NW1/4, W1/2SE1/4SE1/4NW1/4

- b. Mineral Licks. There are several known mineral licks in the Middle and Eastern Subunits that are important to the wildlife using them. Consult ADF&G to determine the location of mineral licks during project reviews and land authorizations.
  - i. Definition. A significant mineral lick means a naturally occurring mineral lick that is used at least annually by one or more species as evidenced by:
    - i. Well-established wildlife trails or braided trail systems leading to the mineral lick site, extensive excavation or trampling, and/or teeth marks, pellets, tracks, and hair.
    - ii. This definition is not applicable where the mineral lick has been created by a human activity (e.g., road construction).
    - iii. Both dry and wet mineral licks can occur. Mineral licks should be identified during spring, summer, and early fall.
  - ii. Information to consider.

- i. Avoid physical destruction of the mineral lick site (e.g., skid trail or road building).
- ii. Maintain the integrity of wildlife trails between mineral lick sites and seasonal ranges (winter/spring range).
- iii. Avoid locating new roads near known mineral lick sites and trails. It is important not to isolate the mineral lick from nearby escape cover (forest, cliffs, rocky outcrops); if roads are required near mineral licks, implement measures to minimize disturbance to mineral lick access trails by restricting the number of road crossings and by maintaining connectivity to adjacent forest areas.
- iv. For existing roads near known mineral licks, minimize road use and disturbance (where possible) during critical use periods.
- v. Where roads can be deactivated, do so as soon as possible; erect all-terrain vehicle barriers; reclaim roads with native vegetation.
- vi. Where harvesting activities occur near lick sites, provide some visual screening (i.e., forested cover) around the lick; this will provide security and escape cover for animals using the lick.
- vii. Arrange helicopter or fixed-wing flight plans to avoid areas with known mineral licks, especially during critical use periods (May–November; date will depend on geographic location and species).
- iii. Buffer requirements.
  - i. Do not construct roads within 700 ft of a lick unless no other practical option exists. Maintain a visual screen between any roads (existing or built) and the lick. If no longer needed, reclaim any existing roads within 700 ft of the lick.
  - ii. Maintain a minimum 350 ft buffer of intact forest around licks; this buffer should include at least two primary trails leading to the lick and connect adjacent forest to provide a windfirm travel corridor.
  - iii. Avoid conducting field work that may influence wildlife behavior within 350 ft of a lick from April 1 to November 1 (where possible). Leave the area if animals are observed approaching or at the site.

#### 4. Relationship of Minerals to Other Resource Values

- a. Recreational Values. Mining operations should attempt to minimize the impact on the recreational use and values of an area. Recreational trails may be relocated if necessary to maintain safe public access around active mining operations. DNR and ADF&G will be consulted regarding trail relocation.
- b. Public Access Across Mining Sites. Public access within an operating mine area may be restricted only if authorized under an approved plan of operations, or land use permit, to protect public safety, or to prevent unreasonable interference with the rights of the miner to operate.

# Trails

## Background

The Moose Range and the JPUA contain a variety of different trails and trail types that serve multiple uses throughout the year. Some trails are mapped and secured legally through official means, including RS2477 status or express grant easements authorized by DNR, while others are traditional routes that traverse multiple land ownerships and provide important access to the Moose Range and JPUA. Some trails are mapped and have been used for hunting and motorized and non-motorized recreation.

The most concentrated trail use in the summertime occurs in the Jonesville Management Subunit where there are conflicts between motorized and non-motorized users along the Eska Creek Trail. Additionally, a groomed network of multi-use winter trails has been established in the Western Management Subunit and maintained by the Mat-Su Ski Club. These trails are becoming increasingly popular and primarily serve those seeking 'close-to-home' recreation opportunities by residents from the growing neighborhoods adjacent to the Moose Range including Buffalo Mine Road, Soapstone Road, and residents of Palmer. The trails in the Western and Jonesville Management Subunits are becoming more popular on the weekends and see use from people from all throughout Southcentral Alaska. The trails in the Middle and Eastern Management Subunits see lower levels of use, comparatively.

Considerable trail, wetland, and stream degradation has occurred in the Moose Range and JPUA with the increased use of OHV and other motorized use. The most significant damage to wetland habitat from motorized use occurs in the fall, during the hunting season. In addition to trail degradation, new trails have been developed and have not been formally documented.

## Goals

1. Maintain and enhance motorized and non-motorized recreational opportunities while protecting fish, wildlife, and their habitats.
2. Reduce trail user conflicts by designating some trails for specific uses.

## Objectives

DNR should initiate a Trails Management Plan (TMP) for the Moose Range and JPUA to identify existing trails and assess existing conditions, including the level of impact trail use has had on fish, wildlife, and habitat. The TMP should establish trail types, uses, and guidelines by completing Trail Management Objectives (See the Alaska State Parks Trail Policy and Trail Management Handbook for guidance). The TMP may also identify where additional trails are needed to improve recreational opportunities, reduce user conflicts, and minimize impacts to fish and wildlife and their habitat. Additionally, and in consultation with ADF&G, trails that are incompatible with the plan goals and objectives may be closed or decommissioned.

## Management Guidelines

### 1. Trail Management Plan

DNR may develop a Trail Management Plan to identify existing trails, identify opportunities for new trails and trailheads, create standards for trail types, designate uses for specific trails, designate responsibility for trail management, and develop regulations to minimize adverse impacts.

### 2. Managing Trail Use

- a. Restricting Uses. Through the TMP process, DNR may identify appropriate use restrictions on trails for public safety and to minimize conflicts between trail users and incompatible uses and in consultation with ADF&G to protect fish, wildlife, and their habitat. If outside the TMP process, when DNR and ADF&G agree that a conflict exists and needs to be resolved using use restrictions, the following procedures should be followed:
  - i. DNR and ADF&G Consultation. DNR and ADF&G should clearly identify the issues and problems involved and develop criteria necessary to determine the acceptable level of environmental degradation or disturbance, and the actions required to alleviate the problem.
  - ii. Public Involvement. The state will involve the public recreational user groups affected by the conflict in developing a resolution.
  - iii. Resolution Options. Options for resolution to be considered include, but are not limited to, seasonal use restrictions, relocation/reclamation of a trail away from the area of conflict, and closure of a specific trail or area to motorized vehicle use<sup>4</sup>.
  - iv. Exceptions. Management activities, such as research, forestry, DNR authorizations, ADF&G Fish Habitat authorizations, and habitat enhancement will be considered following Agency Review.
- b. Signs. Wayfinding and informational signs may be posted along trails where desirable and in accordance with management needs.
- c. Trailhead Parking. Trailhead parking facilities may be developed at major access points to the Moose Range and JPUA to provide the public with safe access to trails. Parking facilities shall be in areas that are safe, with good visibility to prevent vandalism and theft, and that are compatible with adjacent land uses. Parking lots shall not be developed in residential neighborhoods unless the trailhead is actively managed by DNR or another agency or partner. Restrooms and signage may be included.

### 3. Trail Maintenance

- a. Maintenance. Trails should be maintained as funds and volunteer support permit. Trail maintenance work is intended to maintain a trail to the assigned trail type as identified in the TMP. Trail re-routes may be authorized to relocate a trail to a more sustainable layout. If trail maintenance is required outside of the TMP process, see 2a above.

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<sup>4</sup> Whether through the TMP process or other processes, trail use restrictions will require the promulgation of regulations for implementation.

- b. Signs. Wayfinding and informational signs may be posted along trails where desirable and in accordance with management needs.
- c. Agreements. DNR may consider agreements with organizations or individuals for the maintenance of trails, segments of trails, or trailheads.
- d. Volunteers. Agreements with volunteer groups for trail work are encouraged but should specify that the group has no exclusive rights to use.

#### 4. New Trail Development

The TMP should identify opportunities to develop new trails within the planning area to maintain or enhance motorized and non-motorized use, reduce user conflicts, and accommodate increase demand in trails use. These trails should be developed consistent with the following guidelines:

- a. Individuals, organizations, or partner agencies may submit applications to DNR for authorization to develop new trails. DNR shall consult with ADF&G and other agencies as appropriate.
- b. New trails within the planning area should be developed as sustainable trails, be consistent with the management strategy of dispersed recreation, be sited to avoid sensitive areas, and be designed to minimize impacts to fish and wildlife and their habitats.
- c. If new facilities or trails cannot avoid sensitive areas including waterfowl nesting habitat, fish spawning and rearing areas, moose calving concentration areas, they will be designed and developed to minimize adverse impacts to these resources in consultation with ADF&G.
- d. 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. Various activities on fish bearing waterbodies may require a Fish Habitat Permit through ADF&G such as bridges, culverts, water withdrawals, bank modifications, and some stream crossings.
- e. New trails may be designated for specific purposes as identified in the TMP.
- f. New facilities or trails that cannot avoid or minimize adverse impacts to sensitive areas may not be approved.

## Water, Wetlands, and Waterbodies

### Background

Almost all surface water runoff within the Moose Range and JPUA drains into the Matanuska River; the exception is upper Wasilla Creek which flows directly into the Knik Arm via the Palmer Slough. Four major tributaries to the Matanuska River pass through the Moose Range and JPUA. These include the Kings and Chickaloon Rivers and Moose and Granite Creeks. These streams generally flow south through narrow valleys or gorges and have cut canyons into bedrock over the last 10,000 years.

The headwaters of the Kings and Chickaloon Rivers and Granite Creek originate outside of the Matanuska Valley Moose Range and JPUA boundary. The headwaters of Moose Creek are located within the Moose Range and JPUA boundary. A large portion of the basin's annual runoff occurs in late spring and early summer months--May and June. Stream discharge decreases during winter because of cold temperatures and ice formation. The minimum discharge occurs during the late winter and sometimes the late summer.

There are several smaller creeks which are direct tributaries of the Matanuska River. These include, but are not limited to, Eska and Little Granite Creeks. Gloryhole and Knob Creeks are tributaries of Eska Creek. Tributaries of the three major streams include Premier Creek, Iron Creek, and Buffalo Creek (Moose Creek), Young Creek (Kings River), Boulder, Sawmill, California, and Doone Creeks (Chickaloon River). There are numerous unnamed tributaries of all four major streams.

There are numerous lakes within the Moose Range and JPUA, many of which are unnamed, although they probably have local names. Some of the larger lakes include Wishbone, Seventeen Mile, Slipper, Ruby (Rose), Fish and Drill lakes. All these lakes are located within three miles of the southern boundary in the Moose Range and JPUA and are accessible by existing roads or trails. Most of these lakes are surrounded by private lands. Wishbone and Slipper Lakes are surrounded by state lands, and Seventeen Mile Lake has state, borough, and private lands adjacent to it.

The Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act (FRPA) regulates timber harvest as it relates to water quality. Therefore, this plan does not include water-related management strategies or guidelines for timber harvest.

## Goals

1. Provide for common use of water for the maximum benefit to people through the established statutes and regulations related to water management.
2. Protect riparian habitat, breeding areas, lakeshores and river corridors for fish and wildlife and recreational uses.
3. Assure water quality is maintained.

## Objectives

The overall management intent for water, wetlands, and waterbodies (including lakeshores and stream corridors) is to maintain and protect riparian zones, water quality, lake shorelines, and riverbanks while allowing for multiple use of the resources. Public access to public waters should be maintained.

## Management Guidelines

### 1. Water Quality

Water quality shall be maintained in streams, stream segments, wetlands, and waterbodies occurring in the Moose Range and JPUA as required by existing law.

### 2. Riparian Areas

- a. Review Required. Any habitat enhancement activity altering the habitat/vegetation within the riparian zone shall require concurrence by DNR and ADF&G and other appropriate state and federal agencies as necessary, subject to existing laws.
- b. Coal Mining Requirements. Coal mining activities that are approved and occur within riparian zones will follow existing procedures established in ASCMCRA, as well as the guidelines in this plan.

- c. Interagency Review. Mining for other leasable minerals and activities associated with mining for locatable minerals require interagency review of the land use permits and leasing authorizations prior to approval.

### 3. Riparian Buffers

To protect water quality, riparian habitat, and recreational values, a buffer of essentially undisturbed land and vegetation should be protected along anadromous waterbodies and high value fish streams.

- a. Anadromous Waterbodies. The buffer area should be 150 feet on both sides of the ordinary high-water mark and shall include all adjacent riparian zones. In the case of coal development, the buffer will follow existing standards in the Alaska Surface Coal Mining Control and Reclamation Act (AS27.21) and will require a minimum 100-foot setback. In the case of forestry activities, the buffer will follow existing requirements of FRPA and will require a minimum 150-foot setback on each side on all anadromous waterbodies.
- b. Activities Allowed in Riparian Buffers.
  - i. Selective tree cutting as approved by DNR in consultation with ADF&G.
  - ii. Disease, insect, and invasive species control and prevention with pesticides or herbicides as approved by ADF&G, DNR, and DEC.
  - iii. Road and trail access to and along<sup>5</sup> and/or across streams for recreation or habitat enhancement purposes as approved by ADF&G and DNR.
  - iv. DNR, in consultation with ADF&G may authorize recreational trail development within stream buffers.
  - v. Access to and/or across streams for utility lines such as powerlines and waterlines, etc. should not be located parallel to stream systems; rather they should cross streams in a perpendicular fashion to the extent feasible and prudent.

### 4. Freshwater Waterbodies Buffers

- a. Freshwater Lakes. Buffer widths for non-anadromous lakes are set at 100' landward of the lake's ordinary high-water mark.
- b. Perennial Streams. For perennial streams not known to have anadromous fish, but which are identified on a USGS 1 to 63,360 topographic map or field verified by ADF&G and DNR, the buffer should be 100 feet wide on both sides of the ordinary high-water mark and shall encompass the adjacent riparian zones.
- c. Activities Allowed. Activities allowed within freshwater waterbody buffers include the following:
  - i. Selective tree cutting as approved by DNR in consultation with ADF&G.
  - ii. DNR may authorize recreation facility development in consultation with ADF&G.
  - iii. Disease, insect, and invasive species control and prevention with pesticides or herbicides as approved by ADF&G, DNR, and DEC.

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<sup>5</sup> Public Access to and Along all navigable waters or public waters as determined under 11 AAC 51.035. See also 11 AAC 51.045 for easements.

- iv. Road and trail access to and along<sup>6</sup> and/or across streams for recreation or habitat enhancement purposes as approved by ADF&G and DNR.
- v. Access to lakes for utility lines such as powerlines and waterlines, etc. as approved by ADF&G and DNR. Utility systems should not be located so that they parallel lakeshores.

## 5. Wetlands

- a. Protection. All wetlands shall be preserved within the Moose Range and JPUA according to existing state and federal laws. Habitat enhancement efforts in wetlands require interagency review, concurrence by DNR and ADF&G, and should follow the Moose Range and JPUA guidelines.
- b. Wetland Buffers. Buffer widths for all wetlands are set at 100' landward of the wetland edge.
- c. Access. Access through wetland buffers and wetlands should be allowed only on winter ice roads for recreation, habitat enhancement, forest product harvest, and other activities as approved by ADF&G and DNR.
- d. Activities Allowed. Activities allowed within wetland buffers include the following:
  - i. Selective tree cutting as approved by DNR in consultation with ADF&G.
  - ii. Disease, insect, and invasive species control and prevention with pesticides or herbicides as approved by ADF&G, DNR and DEC.
  - iii. Recreation facilities such as docks and boardwalks that do not require fill.
  - iv. Access to wetlands for utility lines such as powerlines and waterlines, etc. as approved by ADF&G and DNR. Utility systems should not be located so that they parallel wetlands.

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<sup>6</sup> Public Access to and Along all navigable waters or public waters as determined under 11 AAC 51.035. See also 11 AAC 51.045 for easements.

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# Chapter 3 : Land Management Guidelines for Individual Subunits

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## Introduction

The following chapter describes the detailed subunit management plan for managing the Moose Range and Jonesville Public Use Area. The Moose Range and JPUA are divided into four management subunits - the Western, Middle, Eastern, and Jonesville Subunits (see Map 4 on page 3-3). Each subunit is described individually and includes a unit description with background information, a summary of planning and land management issues, a land use designation summary description, a management intent statement, and subunit specific management guidelines.

## Organization of Chapter

This chapter includes the following sections for each of the four management subunits:

- Subunit Description
- Planning and Land Management Issues
- Land Use Designations
- Management Intent
- Subunit Management Guidelines

## Subunit Description

Unit descriptions include background information on land status, access, use, fish and wildlife habitat, facilities, trails and easements, and cultural and historical resources.

## Planning and Land Management Issues

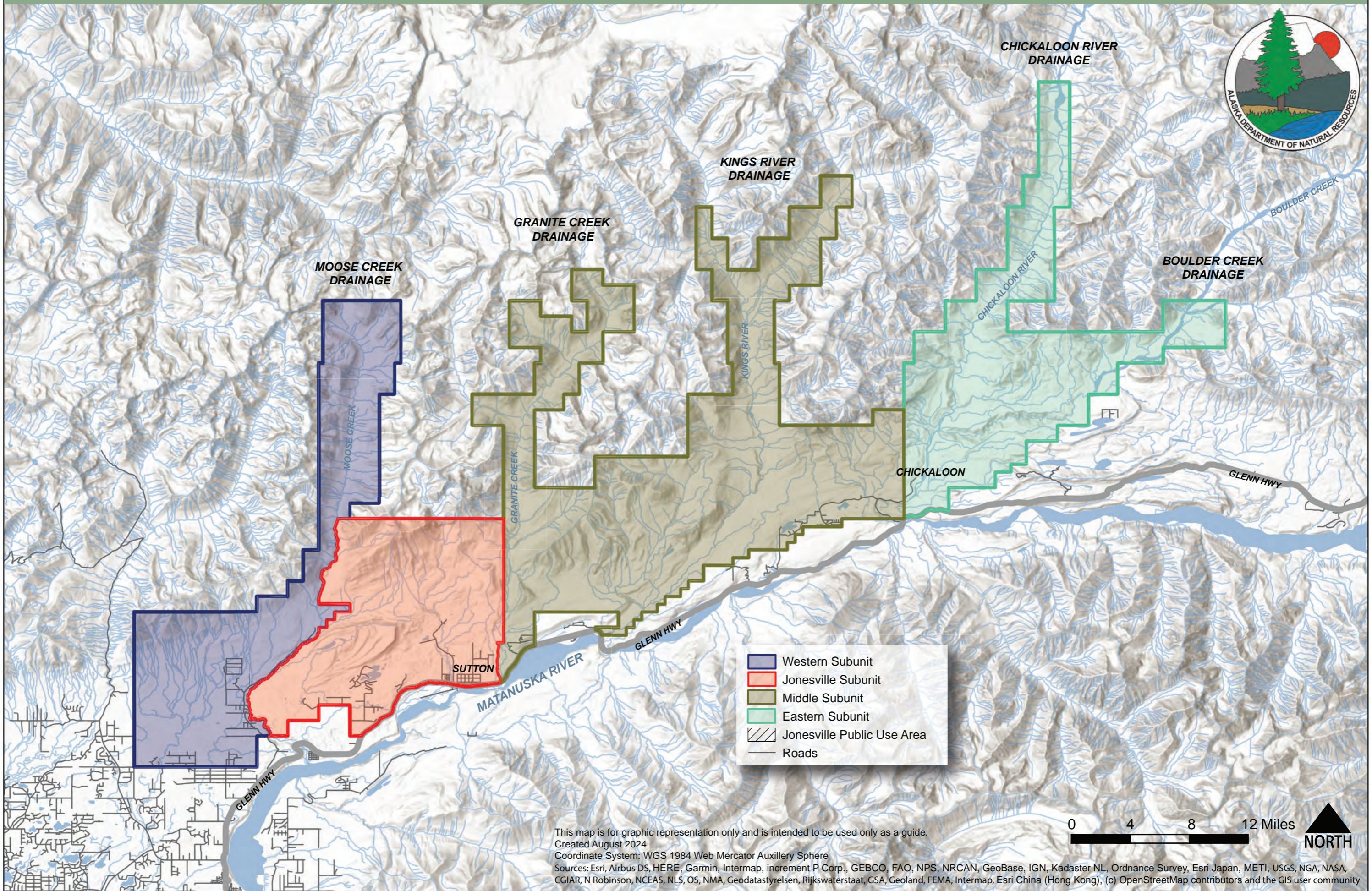
The Planning and Land Management Issues section discusses issues that are affecting management and that management guidelines are intended to address and resolve.

## Land Use Designations

Land uses are designated in each subunit consistent with enabling legislation and other state statutes.

A land use designation recognizes uses or resources that are of major importance in a particular management subunit. Management subunits are broken down into smaller units for land use designation purposes. Unit designations are based on current and projected future use patterns and the most significant resources identified in each unit. DNR will manage activities in the unit to encourage, develop, or protect the uses or resources for which the unit is designated. Plan designations are more specific than the land use classifications required under 11 AAC 55.040, and such designations are

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- Western Subunit
- Jonesville Subunit
- Middle Subunit
- Eastern Subunit
- Jonesville Public Use Area
- Roads

This map is for graphic representation only and is intended to be used only as a guide.  
 Created August 2024  
 Coordinate System: WGS 1984 Web Mercator Auxillary Sphere  
 Sources: Esri, Airbus DS, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodastystrelsen, Rijkswaterstaat, GSA, Geoland, FEMA, Intermap, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors and the GIS user community



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converted to land use classifications, as required by 11 AAC 55.020. DNR will manage state land according to these designations and the equivalent land use classification.

Under AS 38.05.300, all designations are intended for multiple use. Uses other than those receiving primary designations for a given unit may still be authorized if they are not incompatible with the primary uses or resources for which a unit is designated. If DNR determines that a proposed use is incompatible with a primary designation, the proposed use will not be authorized, or will be authorized in a manner that minimizes the incompatibility. Primary designated uses cannot take precedence over disposals of interest that have already occurred. Such disposals include property rights such as mining leases, land leases, and rights-of-way, that once issued, are protected by the Constitution. A primary designation, however, may take precedence over uses authorized by permits that were issued on a revocable at will basis.

When the plan assigns a designation to a unit, the designation is accompanied by a management intent specific to that unit. These two pieces of information – designations and statement of intent – as well as subunit management guidelines, must be taken into consideration when determining how a parcel of state land is to be managed and when making authorization decisions.

**Primary designated use.** Most units are assigned a primary designated use, which indicates, in a general way, how state land is to be used and managed. Primary designated uses shall take precedence over other uses. Generally, however, DNR allows multiple uses. DNR initially presumes that all other uses are compatible with the primary use. However, if DNR determines that a use conflict exists and that the proposed use is incompatible with the primary use, the proposed use should not be authorized, or it should be modified so that the incompatibility no longer exists or the impacts from the proposed use have been effectively mitigated (from 11 AAC 55.040 (c)). The plan may assign a designation to ensure a future use that will best serve the public interest, even if that use is not imminent.

**Co-designated use.** Where a unit has two or more designated uses, DNR will avoid or minimize conflicts between designated uses by applying the management intent statement and guidelines for the unit and the Chapter 2 guidelines from this plan together with existing statutes, regulations, and procedures. Only those co-designations that are generally complementary to or compatible with each other are included in this plan. Co-designated uses should, therefore, be viewed as compatible unless specific conditions that exist at the time an agency is evaluating whether to grant an authorization indicate otherwise. In this plan, co-designated uses are often Habitat, Public Recreation Dispersed, and Forestry. Other co-designations included in the plan are Coal and Habitat. Within areas so co-designated, mineral exploration/development is an appropriate use, however such activities and projects must consider their potential impacts upon wildlife, fisheries, and habitats, and must either avoid or mitigate significant adverse impacts.

#### [Designations Used in This Plan](#)

**Co – Coal.** Areas considered to have coal potential and for which coal mining is an appropriate use, are designated Coal. This designation converts to a land use classification of Coal Land as defined by 11 AAC 55.055.

**F – Forestry.** Land that is or has been forested and is suited for long-term forest management because of its physical, climatic, and vegetative conditions. This land will remain in state ownership. Approving authorizations in these areas will be conducted in compliance with the Forest Resources and Practices Act (AS 41.17 and 11 AAC 95), the specific management guidelines in the Forestry section of Chapter 2, and any specific requirements that might apply at the management unit level identified for a particular management unit. Forest Land is to be retained by the state, although timber sales, a type of disposal, are recognized as appropriate.

Certain sites within the plan area contain both habitat and forestry values and, as such, are co-designated Forestry and Habitat. In these instances, while forest management projects are recognized as appropriate uses, any proposed activity must take into consideration the impacts upon wildlife, fisheries, and their associated habitats.

This designation converts to a land use classification of Forest Land as defined by 11 AAC 55.070.

**Ha – Habitat.** This designation applies to areas of varied size for fish and wildlife species during a sensitive life-history stage where alteration of the habitat or human disturbance could result in a permanent loss of a population or sustained yield of a species or that contain a unique or rare assemblage of a single or multiple species of regional or statewide significance. Land designated Habitat is intended to remain in state ownership, and is to be maintained in an undisturbed, natural state except for improvements related to public health, safety, habitat restoration or rehabilitation, and public recreation. Utilities and roads may be appropriate with appropriate design if habitat functions can be maintained. Authorizations within areas designated Habitat are to be considered inappropriate unless consistent with these stipulations and with the management intent for the management unit.

This designation converts to a land use classification of Wildlife Habitat Land as defined by 11 AAC 55.230.

**Rd – Public Recreation-Dispersed.** This designation applies to those areas that offer or have a high potential for dispersed recreation and where desirable recreation conditions are scattered or widespread rather than localized. Developed facilities are generally not necessary other than trails, trail signs, primitive campsites, and other minor improvements. This land will be retained in public ownership in an undisturbed, natural state except for improvements related to public health, safety, or recreation. Authorizations within areas designated Public Recreation-Dispersed are not to be considered appropriate unless necessary for public health, safety, or recreation. Utilities and roads may be appropriate with appropriate design if recreation functions can be maintained.

This designation converts to a land use classification of Public Recreation Land as defined by 11 AAC 55.160.

**Rp – Public Recreation-Public Use Site (Developed).** This designation applies to areas used by concentrations of recreationists relative to the rest of the planning area or areas with a high potential to attract concentrations of people who recreate. These areas offer localized attractions or ease of access, and in many instances, developed facilities. Examples include marinas, cabins, lodges, anchorages,

scenic overlooks, road-accessible shore locations that are used for picnicking, sports, fishing, etc. The recreation uses for which these units are designated may be either public or commercial. This land will remain in state ownership unless otherwise noted in the management intent for the unit. The primary management intent for these sites is to protect the opportunity of the public to use these sites, and their public values for recreation. Many of these sites require additional management attention because of the use they are receiving.

This designation converts to a land use classification of Public Recreation Land as defined by 11 AAC 55.160.

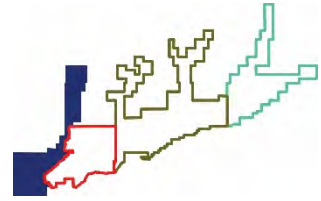
### Management Intent

Management intent provides a statement about the desired future condition of state land consistent with the purposes of the enabling legislation of the Moose Range and JPUA. Specific management recommendations are found in the subunit management guidelines.

### Subunit Management Guidelines

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

# The Western Management Subunit



## Background

The Western Management Subunit includes portions of the Moose Range that lie east of Fishhook Road and west of Moose Creek. The subunit includes the entire Moose Creek drainage within the Talkeetna Mountains and the headwaters and adjacent wetlands of Wasilla Creek, an anadromous stream. The subunit is accessed by Wendt Road from the west, Buffalo Mine Road from the east, and Soapstone Road from the south. Lower elevations of this subunit have high potential for personal and commercial firewood harvest, while upper elevations, above 2,000 feet, have minimal timber value.

The Western Management Subunit is closest to the highest density residential land in Palmer resulting in increased recreational use over the past 10-15 years. Additionally, the Western Management Subunit is in proximity to other public recreation areas including Hatcher Pass Management Area, Little Su Public Use Facility, and Government Peak Recreation Area. Community groups groom a system of trails for winter use. Public lands in the Western Management Subunit are used at moderate levels for dispersed outdoor recreational activities in the summer months and higher levels in the winter. There are few existing developed outdoor recreational facilities in this subunit including an undeveloped trailhead at Wendt Road and a few bridges over Wasilla Creek. The predominant scenic values in this subunit, as viewed from the Glenn Highway, include Arkose Ridge. Although there are no active leases/permits, and there haven't been for many years, the best potential grazing lands in the Moose Range are found in this subunit.

## Planning and Land Management Issues

Due to the proximity to residential development and with some of the most developed access routes, the lands in the Western Management Subunit receive some of the highest motorized and non-motorized recreational trail use. Additionally, the easy access for hunting from Buffalo Mine Road and Fishhook Road put motorized pressure on the Western Management Subunit during the fall when soil conditions are generally saturated. Conflicts between motorized and non-motorized trail users are a significant issue and solutions are required to allow multiple use to continue while protecting wetland habitat and anadromous streams.

## Incompatible Uses

DNR and ADF&G must manage multiple uses consistent with the Moose Range's enabling legislation to maintain, improve, and enhance moose populations and habitat and other wildlife resources of the area. Existing damage to wetlands, streams, and wildlife habitat from motorized recreational use is significant in the Western Management Subunit and the management guidelines below are intended to mitigate the resource damage.

## Land Use Designations

State land will be managed consistent with its designation(s); as specifically articulated through management intent described below and applicable goals and management guidelines found in Chapters 2 and 3. Some lands have one designation while other lands are co-designated for a variety of

uses. Table 1 provides a quick reference of the designations and co-designations used in this management subunit, and the acreages of designation(s).

**Table 1: Western Management Subunit Designations and Acreages**

<i>Designation or Co-Designation</i>	<i>Abbreviation</i>	<i>Acreage</i>
<i>W1: Habitat, Public Recreation-Dispersed</i>	<i>Ha, Rd</i>	<i>21,328</i>
<i>W2: Habitat, Public Recreation-Dispersed, Forestry</i>	<i>Ha, Rd, F</i>	<i>2,213</i>
<i>W3: Coal, Habitat, Public Recreation-Dispersed</i>	<i>Co, Ha, Rd</i>	<i>441</i>

## Management Intent

**Unit W1: Ha, Rd.** The management intent for Unit W1 in the Western Management Subunit is to enhance browse-producing habitat. Manage the unit to protect and maintain fish and wildlife habitat and associated wetlands, streams and waterbodies. Additionally, Unit W1 will be managed for dispersed outdoor recreational activities. Popular activities such as hunting big and small game, trapping, wildlife viewing, horseback riding, hiking, skiing, winter biking, and fishing will continue. To protect wildlife habitat including wetlands and anadromous streams, this plan recommends restricting the use of motorized vehicles to be more restrictive than the Generally Allowed Uses on State Land (11 AAC 96.020). The plan recommends restricting motorized use to designated, hardened routes<sup>7</sup> as identified in a subsequent Trails Management Plan (See Chapter 2, Trails).

Proposed recreational facility development in the subunit includes trail hardening and bridge and culvert installations to protect wetlands and habitat in the vicinity of the Wasilla Creek headwaters. Trailhead facilities should only be authorized as an access point if specific management guidelines are met.

**Unit W2: Ha, Rd, F.** Same intent as Unit W1 with the following addition:

There is a local need for personal firewood, and this need may be met to the extent possible by improving fish and wildlife habitat in conjunction with timber harvest. Timber harvest is allowed only if the activity enhances fish and wildlife habitat.

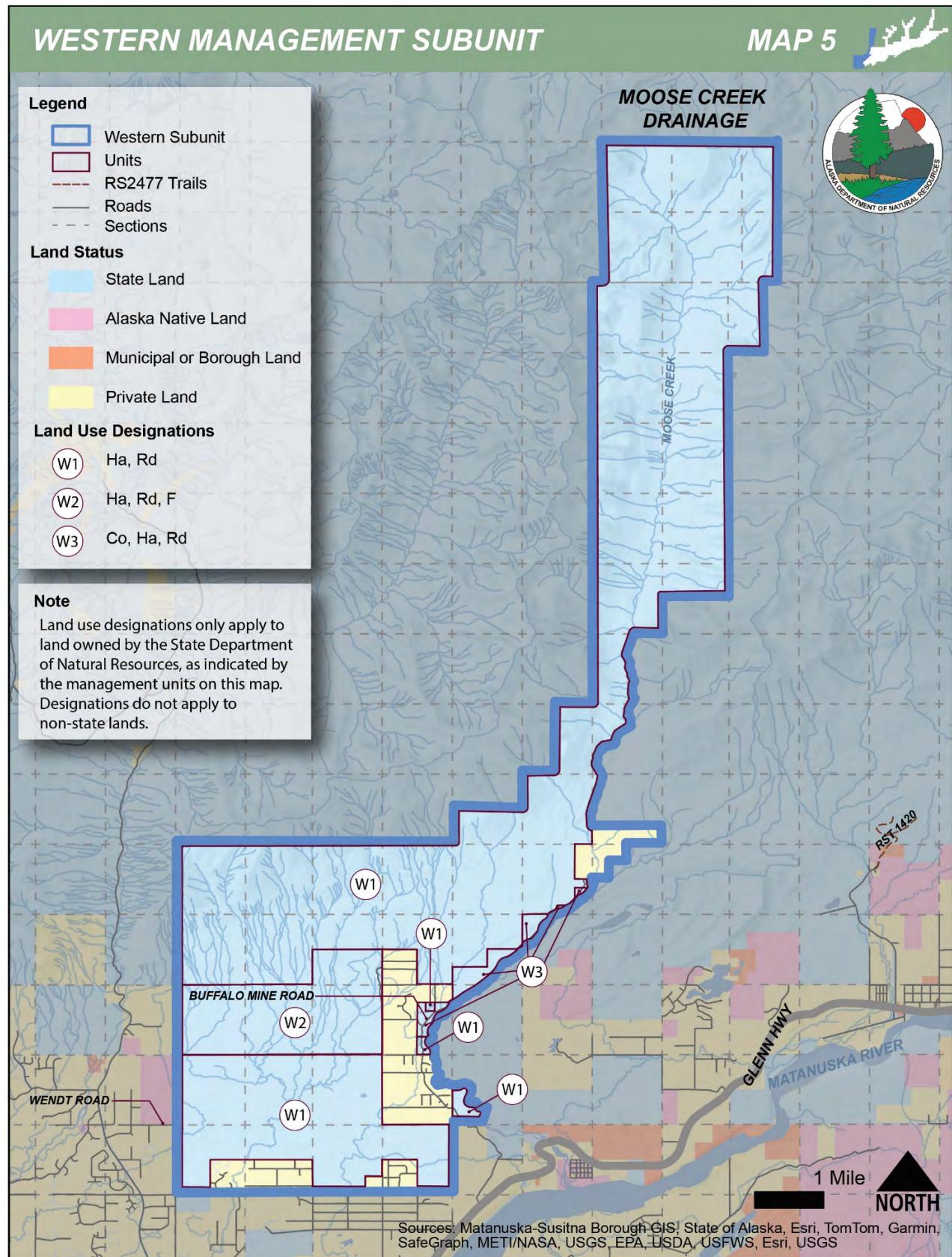
**Unit W3: Co, Ha, Rd.** Same intent as Unit W1 with the following addition:

Coal development is allowed according to existing authorizations. The primary post-mining land use in this unit is designated as Public Recreation-Dispersed (Rd) if the location is appropriate and if the recreation use is consistent with the definition of recreation land in the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act and the Alaska Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act. The secondary post-mining land use is designated as Habitat (Ha) and reclamation efforts will be directed toward producing habitat that is primarily beneficial to moose.

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<sup>7</sup> This management guideline requires the promulgation of regulations for implementation.

# MAP 5: Western Management Subunit



## Subunit Management Guidelines

### 1. Access and Trails

- a. Public Lands. Public access into the Western Management Subunit is necessary for maintaining multiple use. The state will maintain public rights-of-way and/or easements for public access to Moose and Wasilla Creeks, Tsadaka Canyon along Moose Creek, and to public lands along Fishhook, Wendt, Soapstone, Buffalo Mine and Murphy Roads.
- b. Public Use of Existing Access.
  - i. Areas of Open Access. Public sections of the Buffalo Mine and Wendt Roads will remain open to motorized and non-motorized uses.
  - ii. Area of Unimproved, Closed, or Revegetated Roads. To help manage potential human conflicts with habitat enhancement research efforts, the Division of Forestry (DOF&FP) timber harvest roads in the southwest corner of the Western Management Subunit will not be upgraded, improved, or posted with recreational signs. Roads or trails that are required for timber harvest and/or habitat enhancement projects are not necessarily intended for public access and may be closed or revegetated as part of the habitat maintenance or enhancement efforts.
- c. New Access.
  - i. Public input indicates upper Moose Creek drainage should be left undisturbed. No new trails or roads shall be built beyond or north of the knoll located north of the southern section line of Sec. 1 and 2, T19N, R2E, S.M., for recreation, timber management or wildlife habitat enhancement activities.
- d. Trails. In addition to the areawide management guidelines established for trails in Chapter 2, the following guidelines are specific to the Western Management Subunit.
  - i. Trail Use Restrictions. ADF&G and DNR should continue to authorize the construction of hardened routes and sustainable creek crossings. To protect wetland resources and habitat, motorized and mechanized trail use should be restricted in the Western Management Subunit during snow-free and ice-free seasons to authorized hardened routes that will be established by the Trail Management Plan (TMP) defined in Chapter 2 and further explained in Appendix C. Vehicle use restrictions may be necessary to protect habitat.<sup>8</sup>
  - ii. Trail Kiosks, Signage, and Wayfinding. Trailhead maps, kiosks, wayfinding signage, and trail use information may be developed. Signs should clearly display trail use information, regulatory information, and allowed trail uses. Wayfinding and trail use signs may be used to appropriately guide trails users.
- e. Trailheads. After the completion of a Trails Management Plan, DNR may consider authorizing trailhead improvements in the Western Management Subunit that are managed, maintained, consistent with adjacent land uses, and provide legal and accessible access.
  - i. Access to the Western Management Subunit is possible via Wendt Road and Murphy Road. Upgraded trailheads may be developed in these locations for multiple use access

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<sup>8</sup> This management guideline requires the promulgation of regulations for implementation.

to the Moose Range. DNR, DMLW and ADF&G should work cooperatively to develop trailheads designed to be consistent with the intent of the management plan. Trailheads should minimize negative impacts on neighboring private property and land uses. If a trailhead is proposed by an entity other than DNR, a management agreement for active site management, maintenance, and enforcement is required to be in place prior to authorization. Additionally, a trailhead should not be authorized until the Trail Management Plan (TMP) for the Moose Range and JPUA is complete and there is a more thorough understanding of the capacity of the trail system in the Western Management Subunit for increased use.

## 2. Cultural and Heritage Resources

- h. Known Sites. One heritage resource site is recorded on the Alaska Heritage Resources Survey in the Western Management Subunit. This site will be managed according to the guidelines in Chapter 2.
- i. Undiscovered Sites. The Western Management Subunit has been used historically by Alaska Native people primarily traveling along the Matanuska River and up into the Moose Creek Drainage. With the extent of past cultural use, it is likely that additional cultural resources may be located. Areas in the Western Management Subunit designated by SHPO as known and high potential areas for containing heritage resources should be surveyed for heritage values as funding and staffing allow.

## 3. Fish, Wildlife, and Forestry

- a. Resource Management. This subunit will be managed primarily to maintain, protect and, if necessary, enhance the following fish and wildlife resources and habitats:
  - i. Moose throughout the subunit.
  - ii. Ruffed grouse throughout the subunit.
  - iii. Brown bear in upper Moose Creek drainage.
  - iv. Black bear throughout the subunit.
  - v. Dall sheep in upper Moose Creek and in higher elevations.
  - vi. Small game and furbearers.
  - vii. Riparian habitats and instream flow along Moose and Wasilla Creeks.
  - viii. Chinook and coho salmon and Dolly Varden in Moose Creek.
  - ix. Coho and Chinook salmon, Dolly Varden and rainbow trout in upper Wasilla Creek.
  - x. Habitat for moose and other wildlife species.
  - xi. Buffer areas around Moose and Wasilla Creeks.
  - xii. Other species and habitats identified by ADF&G.
- b. Fish and Wildlife Utilization. The subunit will be managed to allow continuation of the following activities:
  - i. Hunting of big and small game and trapping throughout the subunit.
  - ii. Sportfishing for anadromous, resident, and stocked fish.

- iii. Wildlife viewing throughout the subunit.
- c. Habitat Enhancement. The Western Management Subunit may be managed to produce moose habitat. Secondly, DNR, in consultation with ADF&G, may authorize research to identify preferred methods for habitat enhancement and regeneration of browse. DNR, ADF&G, and others will work cooperatively on research efforts whenever possible. Techniques may include willow bundle planting, scarification, use of seed trees, selective cutting of spruce, and variations in the size and shape of cuts. Techniques to be tested include, but are not limited to, overstory removal, burning, pesticides, and plant trimming to promote sprouting.
- d. Fisheries. ADF&G will maintain, protect, and enhance as appropriate the fisheries and habitats of Wasilla and Moose Creeks. To accomplish this, ADF&G may conduct spawning and escapement surveys, monitor trends in harvest angler effort, and develop recommendations for field investigations and/or Board of Fisheries consideration, as time and funds allow. ADF&G will adjust stocking levels in stocked lakes based on health and survival of stocked fish and changes in use patterns and pursuant to the annual public review of the statewide stocking plan. ADF&G will manage sport fisheries for sustained yield and angler satisfaction, work closely with enforcement staff in adherence to regulations, and assist in habitat conservation and restoration.

#### 4. Forestry

Timber harvest operations that enhance fish and wildlife habitat may be authorized in the Western Management Subunit. Specific sales locations and dates will be identified by DOF&FP in consultation with ADF&G. The criteria for determining the location of cutting units includes access on existing roads/trails to allow the public to obtain firewood. Commercial timber harvests will occur in areas where cost effectiveness and habitat enhancement methods justify such harvests.

- a. Timber Harvest and/or Habitat Enhancement Location.
  - i. Elevation. No timber may be harvested above 1,100 feet elevation.
  - ii. Schedule. The schedule for forest product harvest in the Western Management Subunit should be identified by DOF&FP in consultation with ADF&G.
  - iii. Buffers. See Buffer guidelines in Chapter 2.

#### 5. Public Use Sites

The addition of Public Use Sites may be appropriate in the Western Management Subunit. The plan recommends completing a Trail Management Plan and through that process, DNR may identify appropriate trails, trail facilities, trailheads, and Public Use Sites.

#### 6. Recreation

Follow the areawide management guidelines in Chapter 2.

#### 7. Subsurface Resources

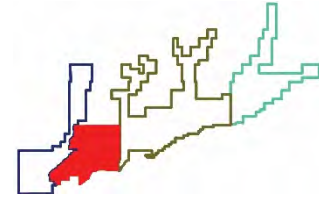
The Western Management Subunit is open to locatable and leasable mineral development. There is no known coal potential in upper Moose Creek.

## 8. Water, Wetlands, and Waterbodies

### a. Lakeshores and Stream Corridors.

- i. Wasilla Creek. There is a 200-foot buffer on each side of Wasilla Creek above ordinary high water. Any habitat enhancement activity altering the habitat/vegetation within the buffer shall require concurrence by DNR and ADF&G. See Chapter 2 guidelines on stream corridors and lakeshores for other allowed activities within buffers.
  - ii. Other Streams and Lakes. Habitat enhancement efforts in riparian zones along Moose Creek may take place according to the Chapter 2 guidelines on buffers.
- b. Wetland Buffers. Large wetlands, more than 700 acres, exist in the southwestern end of this subunit in the headwaters of Wasilla Creek. A buffer will be retained around them as described in Chapter 2.
- c. Instream Flow Data Collection. ADF&G may collect instream flow data needed to inform its Title 16 permit decision-making process for Wasilla Creek and Moose Creek to maintain adequate flow for fish habitat. DNR DMLW shall work closely with ADF&G to identify waters where instream flow data needs to be collected associated with any work that will require permitting by either agency.

# The Jonesville Management Subunit



## Background

The Jonesville Public Use Area (JPUA), Alaska Statute 41.23.280, was established by the Alaska State Legislature in 2018 to address the public's safety concerns in the area and to protect a spectrum of public recreation activities while maintaining fish and wildlife habitat and allowing compatible uses. The JPUA lies almost entirely within the Moose Range.

This area extends from Buffalo Mine Road and the ordinary high-water mark of Moose Creek nearly six miles east to a north-south section line near and roughly paralleling Granite Creek. Moose Creek and Granite Creek roughly comprise the western and eastern boundaries, respectively. The Glenn Highway forms most of the unit's southern boundary, and an east-west section line between Eska Mountain and Granite Peak forms the northern boundary. The dominant features of this area are the benchlands above the Matanuska River and the alpine and subalpine terrain around Eska Mountain. The Eska Creek drainage and its tributaries are the dominant hydrologic features of the area. The area includes lands around Wishbone Hill, Seventeen Mile Lake, and the Sutton community.

This Moose Range Management Plan will provide management direction for both the Moose Range and the JPUA. The lands that are legislatively designated as the JPUA will comprise the bulk of the Jonesville Management Subunit. To ensure management consistency, additional lands within the boundary of the Moose Range that are south of the JPUA between Moose Creek and Granite Creek will also be included in the Jonesville Management Subunit. The specific management recommendations for the Jonesville Management Subunit will be consistent with the enabling legislation of both the JPUA and the Moose Range.

The subunit has moderate-to-high values for fish, wildlife, and forestry resources. Big and small game hunting, fishing, and trapping are historic uses of the area and occur throughout the subunit today. Subsistence and sport harvest both occur but cannot be readily quantified. Wildlife viewing mostly occurs in road and trail-accessible areas of the subunit. Habitat enhancement research efforts and regeneration of habitat projects have been established in this subunit and are ongoing. Moose habitat is being enhanced in the subunit to offset critical habitat being lost to development elsewhere in the Matanuska Valley. Wishbone Lake has highly valued rainbow trout sport fishing opportunities.

Jonesville Mine Road is the primary road used to access the area. Seventeen Mile Lake and Wishbone Strip Mine Trails provide primary trail access into the subunit. There is secondary access from All Elks Road, Buffalo Mine Road, and Mile 58 Road.

Moderate to high levels of recreational use occur in this unit year-round, but primarily on weekends. Both non-motorized and motorized use occurs; however, most of the recreational use is motorized.

Non-motorized uses in the area include hiking, fishing, boating, camping, wildlife viewing, fossil viewing, horseback riding, biking, swimming, recreational shooting, trapping, and hunting. This unit is the gateway for many users to access state land to the north, east, and west. When ice and snow conditions

permit, the area receives a variety of uses, including snowshoeing, winter biking, skiing, ice fishing, and dogsledding. Non-motorized boating occurs during the ice-free periods on Slipper Lake. Several creeks in and around the unit are used by canoes, kayaks, or rafts.

Motorized uses include highway, OHV, ATV, side-by-side and dirt bike operation as a means of access for fishing, hunting, trapping, camping, wildlife viewing, photography, and recreation. OHV use occurs primarily on the numerous trails throughout the subunit. During winter months, frozen ground conditions allow for increased motorized recreational opportunities and access.

Some of the highest-grade coal resources in the state are in the lower half of the Jonesville Management Subunit.

The predominant scenic values in this subunit, as viewed from the Glenn Highway, include Wishbone Hill, Eska Mountain, and Granite Peak.

### Planning and Land Management Issues

The primary issues in the Jonesville Management Subunit are unsafe and unlawful activities, conflicting and incompatible uses, trespassing concerns on private land, and noise disturbing area residents. Unsafe recreational shooting throughout the subunit is one of the primary threats to public safety.

Many users of the Jonesville Management Subunit engage in activities that are unlawful or are a threat to public safety. Some issues identified by the public include dangerous and/or reckless discharge of weapons, destruction of private and public property, and the burning of automobiles. Users indicate that they do not feel safe when others are shooting in the area or discharging illegal explosives. Several public comments cited a lack of enforcement as a major issue.

The relative ease of access of the Jonesville Management Subunit from the Glenn Highway via Jonesville Mine Road contribute to the issues. Many users access the area by means of a motorized highway and OHVs to reach the unmanaged trails in the forest and sub-alpine areas. The area is popular with motorized trail users for recreation because it is adjacent to state land for hunting and fishing. The high level of use is causing negative effects on the trails such as braiding, rutting, and debris, making the trails unusable for some methods of non-motorized use. Some users suggested they are displaced from the area because of conflict with other user groups on trails.

The increased use may be negatively affecting water quality in the area. Some issues identified include camping with no sanitary method of human waste disposal, leaving shooting litter with no lead containment or cleanup, and dumping of household waste (trash, electronics, and vehicles).

### Compatible Uses

The enabling legislation of the JPUA requires DNR to protect, maintain, enhance, and perpetuate the present use of the JPUA. The legislation directs the DNR Commissioner to allow the JPUA to be used for activities that are compatible with its establishment including operating all-terrain vehicles on trails or in areas designated or constructed for their use, aircraft, and watercraft; snowmachining, horseback riding, hiking, bicycling, dog sledding, cross-country skiing, skijoring, camping, hunting, fishing, trapping, wildlife

viewing, photography, berry picking; and, where permitted, rifle and pistol ranges, parking of vehicles, and lawful mineral exploration and mining<sup>9</sup>. All above listed activities are compatible and can occur safely, when following the management guidelines of this plan.

## Incompatible Uses

The JPUA enabling legislation allows for uses to be restricted if those uses are determined to be one of the following:

1. Incompatible with the purpose of the JPUA as defined in AS 41.23.280.
2. Incompatible with one or more other uses in the JPUA.

Furthermore, the JPUA legislation does not allow the restriction of the use of weapons, including firearms, except in locations where there is a threat to public safety<sup>10</sup>. As required by AS 41.23.284(f), if the Commissioner determines that a use is incompatible with one or more other uses in a portion of the JPUA, the Commissioner shall describe:

- (1) each determination of incompatibility;
- (2) the specific area where the incompatibility is determined to exist;
- (3) the time within which the incompatibility is determined to exist; and
- (4) the reasons for the determination of incompatibility.

### Incompatibility Determination

This Plan finds the use of weapons, including firearms, incompatible with one or more uses in the JPUA except if being used for lawful hunting or trapping or within a designated shooting area. The use of firearms for lawful hunting and trapping is compatible with the purpose of the JPUA and other uses in the JPUA.

1. Determination of Incompatibility. The unorganized use of weapons, including firearms, is not compatible with other recreational uses occurring in the JPUA and creates a significant threat to public safety. There are currently no designated areas or infrastructure for target shooting and weapons discharge placing other users and neighboring residential areas at significant risk of property damage, injury, and/or death. There are no lead containment or shooting debris clean-up requirements contributing to litter and pollution. Weapons discharge and target shooting produce noise at significant levels at all times of the day impacting all other uses including neighboring residential areas, wildlife, and their habitat.
2. Specific Area Where Incompatibility is Determined to Exist. The unorganized use of weapons, including firearms, is incompatible in the high-use area of the Jonesville Management Subunit near Slipper Lake, Eska Falls, Wishbone Lake, near residential areas, and other private property.

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<sup>9</sup> As outlined in AS 41.23.284 (d) (B)

<sup>10</sup> See AS 41.23.284 (c) (2)

3. Time Within Which Incompatibility is Determined to Exist. The JPUA is used at all hours of the day, all days of the week, and all months of the year for recreation. The incompatibility of unorganized use of weapons, including firearms, is present at all times of the day and year.
4. Reasons for Determination of Incompatibility. The use of weapons, including firearms, is not compatible with other recreational uses in the JPUA due to the significant threat to public safety, property damage, noise, and contamination (See bullet 1 above).

## Land Use Designations

State land will be managed consistent with its designation(s); as specifically articulated through management intent described below and applicable goals and management guidelines found in Chapters 2 and 3. Some lands have one designation while other lands are co-designated for a variety of uses. Table 2 provides a quick reference of the designations and co-designations used in this management subunit, and the acreages of designation(s). Refer to Map 6 on page 3-20.

***Table 2: Jonesville Management Subunit Designations and Acreages***

<i>Designation or Co-Designation</i>	<i>Abbreviation</i>	<i>Acreage</i>
<i>J1: Habitat, Public Recreation-Dispersed</i>	<i>Ha, Rd</i>	<i>8,065</i>
<i>J2: Coal, Habitat, Public Recreation-Dispersed</i>	<i>Co, Ha, Rd</i>	<i>5,931</i>
<i>J3: Coal, Public Recreation-Public Use Site</i>	<i>Co, Rp</i>	<i>3,332</i>

## Management Intent

**Unit J1: Ha, Rd.** The primary management intent for Unit J1 is to manage for dispersed outdoor recreation use and mitigate conflicts between incompatible uses as necessary. In addition to outdoor public recreational use, Unit J1 should be managed to enhance browse-producing habitat. Manage the unit to protect and maintain fish and wildlife habitat including wetlands and anadromous streams and waterbodies. A subsequent Trails Management Plan (See Chapter 2, Trails) should address the impacts associated with the use and proliferation of trails in the unit. Trails should be assessed, classified, designated, and improved as identified in the TMP. Popular activities such as hunting big and small game, trapping, wildlife viewing, fossil hunting, off-road vehicle riding, overnight camping, horseback riding, hiking, biking, skiing, and fishing will continue. DNR should manage the Eska Creek Falls Public Use Site (See Map 7, page 3-25) to minimize user conflicts, ensure public safety, and mitigate damage to habitat from off-road motorized vehicle use.

**Unit J2: Co, Ha, Rd.** The primary management intent for Unit J2 is to manage for dispersed outdoor recreation use and mitigate conflicts between incompatible uses as necessary. In addition to outdoor public recreational use, Unit J2 should be managed to enhance browse-producing habitat. Manage the unit to protect and maintain fish and wildlife habitat including wetlands and anadromous streams and waterbodies. A subsequent Trails Management Plan (See Chapter 2, Trails) may address the impacts associated with the use and proliferation of trails in the unit. Trails should be assessed, classified,

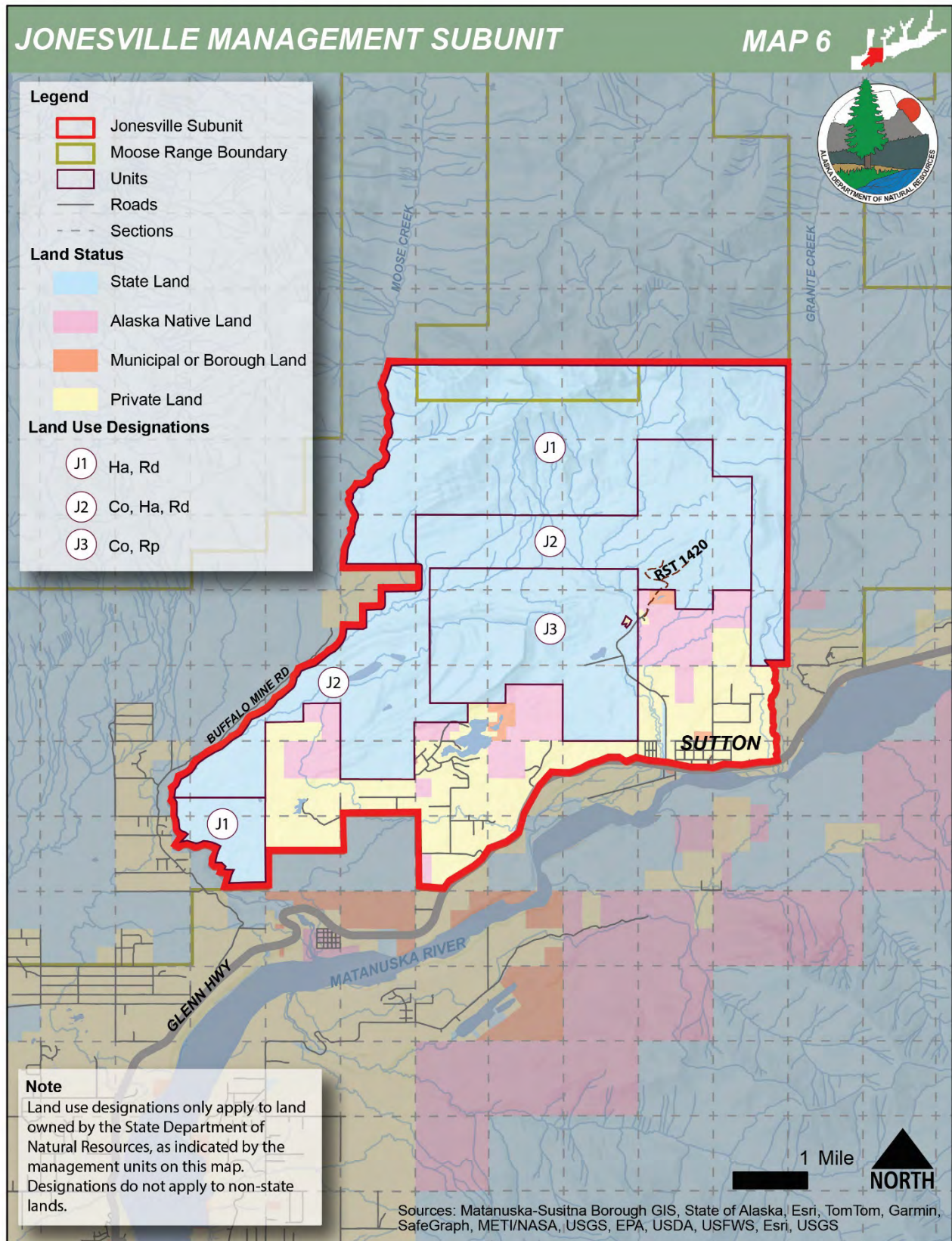
designated, and improved as identified in the TMP. Popular activities such as hunting big and small game, trapping, wildlife viewing, off-road vehicle riding, overnight camping, horseback riding, hiking, biking, skiing, and fishing will continue. DNR should manage the Wishbone Lake public use site (See Map 7, page 3-25) to minimize user conflicts and ensure public safety. Shoreline improvements such as docks may be considered at Wishbone Lake.

Coal development will proceed according to existing authorizations. The primary post-mining land use in this area is designated Rd if the location is appropriate and if the recreation use is consistent with the definition of recreation land in the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act and the Alaska Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act. The secondary post-mining land use is designated as Habitat (Ha) and reclamation efforts will be directed toward producing habitat that is primarily beneficial to moose. In situations where coal development is scheduled, utilization of timber resources on lands leased for coal will be encouraged. The entire subunit will remain open for locatable mineral entry and for the leasing of coal and oil and gas. It is possible that the state will lease small tracts adjacent to the existing coal leases if it appears that they contain coal.

**Unit J3: Co, Rp.** The primary management intent for Unit J3 is to manage high levels of outdoor public recreational use and mitigate the conflicts between incompatible uses. DNR may manage the Slipper Lake public use site (See Map 7, page 3-25) to minimize user conflicts and ensure public safety. Developed recreation facilities constructed at key locations would enhance the public's enjoyment of the area, protect public safety, and minimize impacts on fish and wildlife habitats. A few key facilities, such as designated camping areas, once constructed, along with active management and enforcement, will greatly enhance public safety and enjoyment of Unit J3. Popular activities such as hunting big and small game, trapping, wildlife viewing, off-road vehicle riding, overnight camping, horseback riding, hiking, biking, skiing, and fishing will continue. A subsequent Trails Management Plan (See Chapter 2, Trails) may address the impacts associated with the use and proliferation of trails in the unit. Trails should be assessed, classified, designated, and improved or constructed as identified in the TMP. The development of a public shooting range that is designed for long-range shooting and that minimizes noise disturbance is allowed in Unit J3.

Coal development may proceed according to existing authorizations and coordination with public recreational use will be required. The primary post-mining land use in this area is designated Rp if the location is appropriate and if the recreation use is consistent with the definition of recreation land in the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act and the Alaska Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act.

## MAP 6: Jonesville Management Subunit



## Subunit Management Guidelines

### 1. Access and Trails

- a. Public Lands. Public access into the Jonesville Management Subunit is necessary for maintaining multiple use. The state should ensure access to public rights-of-way and easements for public access to Wishbone Lake and Eska Creek.
- b. Public Use of Existing Access.
  - i. Areas of Open Access. Public sections of the Buffalo Mine Road, mining spur roads to Wishbone Lake and Seventeen Mile Lake, and the Jonesville Mine Road and mining spur roads to the east will remain open to motorized and non-motorized uses.
  - ii. Areas of Unimproved, Closed, or Revegetated Roads. Roads or trails that are required for timber harvest and/or habitat enhancement projects are not necessarily intended for public access and may be closed or revegetated as part of the habitat maintenance or enhancement efforts.
  - iii. Areas with Active Assertion. The public has been using the mining roads that connect Buffalo Mine Road, Seventeen Mile Lake, and Jonesville Road since they were constructed. DNR DMLW will continue researching the validity of a public right-of-way on roads and trails and follow Chapter 2 guidelines for making a right-of-way assertion wherever necessary and possible. This includes access to Wishbone Lake off the mining roads system.
- c. New Access. New trailheads to the Jonesville Management Subunit may be developed.
- d. Trails. In addition to the areawide management guidelines established for trails in Chapter 2, the following guidelines are specific to the Jonesville Management Subunit.
  - i. Develop Non-motorized Hiking Trails. The following non-motorized hiking trails may be developed:
    - 1) Slipper Lake parking lot to the Eska Falls hiking trail.
    - 2) Hiking trail to the top of Wishbone Hill.
  - ii. Access Improvements. The access road to the Eska Creek Falls Hiking Trail should be improved.
  - iii. Trail Kiosks, Signage, and Wayfinding. Trailhead maps, kiosks, wayfinding signage, and trail use information may be developed. Signs will clearly display trail use information, regulatory information, and allowed trail uses. Wayfinding and trail use signs may be used to appropriately guide trails users.

### 2. Cultural and Heritage Resources

- a. Known Sites. Three known heritage resource sites have been recorded on the Alaska Heritage Resources Survey in the Jonesville Management Subunit. These sites will be managed according to the guidelines in Chapter 2.
- b. Undiscovered Sites. The Jonesville Management Subunit has been used historically by Alaska Native people primarily traveling along the Matanuska River and up into the Moose Creek drainage. Coal mining near Jonesville/Sutton subsequently spurred the development of the non-

native communities. With the extent of past use, it is likely that additional cultural resources may be located in the future. Areas in the Jonesville Management Subunit designated by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) as known and high potential areas for containing heritage resources may be surveyed for heritage values as funding and staffing allow.

### 3. Fish and Wildlife

- a. Resource Management. This subunit will be managed primarily to maintain, protect and, if necessary, enhance the following fish and wildlife resources and habitats:
  - i. Moose throughout the subunit.
  - ii. Ruffed grouse throughout the subunit.
  - iii. Brown bear in upper Moose Creek drainage.
  - iv. Black bear throughout the subunit.
  - v. Dall sheep in upper Moose Creek and in higher elevations.
  - vi. Small game and furbearers.
  - vii. Riparian habitats and instream flow along Eska Creek.
  - viii. Dolly Varden, Chinook, coho, and sockeye salmon in Eska Creek.
  - ix. All 5 species of Pacific salmon in Moose Creek.
  - x. Rainbow trout in Slipper and Wishbone Lakes.
  - xi. Habitat for moose and other wildlife species.
  - xii. Rainbow trout in Coyote Lake.
  - xiii. Buffer around Wishbone Lake.
  - xiv. Other species and habitats identified by ADF&G.
- b. Fish and Wildlife Utilization. The subunit will be managed to allow continuation of the following activities:
  - i. Hunting of big and small game and trapping throughout the subunit.
  - ii. Sportfishing for anadromous, resident, and stocked fish.
  - iii. Wildlife viewing throughout the subunit.
- c. Habitat Enhancement. Habitat enhancement techniques that are proven to be cost-efficient and environmentally sound may be applied.
- d. Fisheries. ADF&G will maintain, protect, and enhance, as appropriate, the fisheries and habitats of Eska and Moose Creeks and Wishbone and Slipper Lakes. To accomplish this, ADF&G may conduct spawning and escapement surveys, monitor trends in harvest angler effort, and develop recommendations for field investigations and/or Board of Fisheries consideration, as time and funds allow. ADF&G will adjust stocking levels in stocked lakes based on health and survival of stocked fish and changes in use patterns and pursuant to the annual public review of the statewide stocking plan. ADF&G will manage sport fisheries for sustained yield and angler satisfaction, work closely with enforcement staff in adherence to regulations, and assist in habitat conservation and restoration.

#### 4. Forestry

- a. Timber Harvest. Timber harvest operations that enhance fish and wildlife habitat may be authorized in the Jonesville Management Subunit. Specific sale locations and dates will be identified by DOF&FP in consultation with ADF&G. The criteria for determining the location of cutting units includes identifying access on existing roads/trails to allow the public to obtain firewood. Commercial timber harvests will occur in areas where cost effectiveness and habitat enhancement methods justify such harvests.
  - i. Coal Leases. Timber harvest may be pursued on existing coal development leases near Wishbone Hill to utilize existing timber resources prior to coal development.
  - ii. Elevation. No timber shall be harvested above 1,100 feet elevation except for habitat enhancement purposes.
  - iii. Schedule. The schedule for forest product harvest in the Jonesville Management Subunit should be identified by DOF&FP in consultation with ADF&G.
  - iv. Buffers. See Buffer guidelines in Chapter 2.

#### 5. Public Use Sites

- a. Public Use Sites. Public Use Sites, illustrated on page 3-25, are sites on state land that have been identified as important for public access, recreation, camping, fishing, designated shooting ranges, or other public use. These sites have high public value and therefore should receive a higher degree of management attention to preserve recreation and resource values. The designation of these sites in this management plan serves to recognize the importance of the areas for continued public use. As use patterns change, new sites may be designated. Such additions will be at the discretion of DNR. Improvements such as public facilities, docks, shooting ranges, and boat ramps may be authorized. Within a Public Use Site and based on the incompatibility determination above, uses may be restricted to protect the health and safety of the public.
  - i. The following Public Use Sites are designated in the plan: Slipper Lake, Eska Falls, and Wishbone Lake. See Map 7, page 3-25.
  - ii. Improvements such as public recreational facilities, docks, and boat ramps are encouraged in Public Use Sites.
  - iii. Within a Public Use Site camping may be restricted to a campground, identified campsites, or within a certain distance of a developed recreation facility when developed<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> This management guideline will require the promulgation of regulations for implementation.

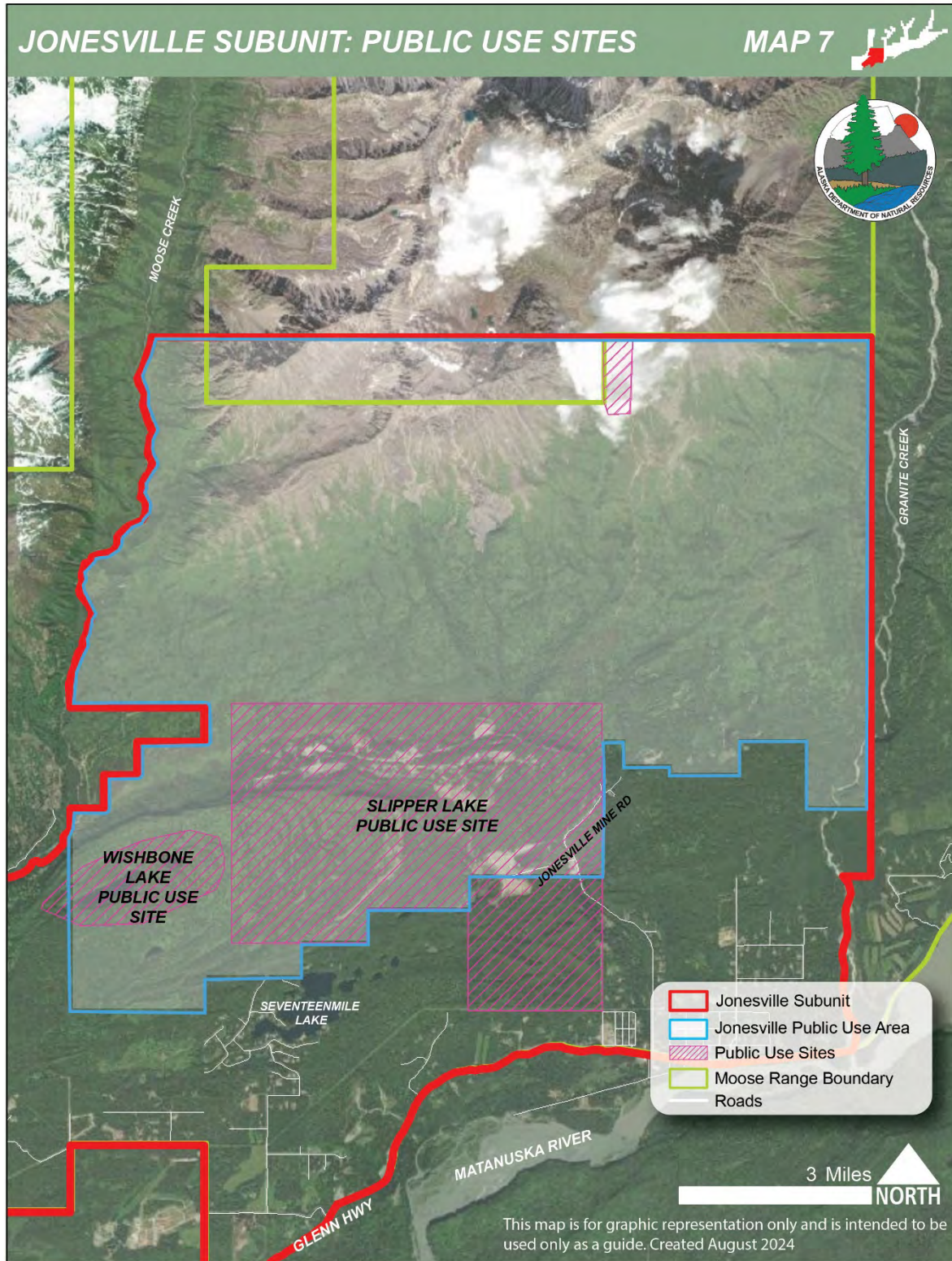
- iv. Within a Public Use Site vehicle and boat speeds may be restricted<sup>12</sup>.
- v. To protect public safety, DNR may restrict the use and discharge of weapons (including for hunting and trapping) in Public Use Sites, or within a certain distance from a developed facility<sup>13</sup>.
- vi. DNR may allow target shooting within a Public Use Site only within a designated and managed shooting area.

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<sup>12</sup> This management guideline will require the promulgation of regulations for implementation.

<sup>13</sup> This management guideline will require the promulgation of regulations for implementation.

# MAP 7: Jonesville Subunit: Proposed Public Use Sites



## 6. Recreation

### a. Facility Development.

- i. Slipper Lake Campground. A campground may be developed at Slipper Lake that provides restrooms. Considerations for a campground should include separate facilities for different user groups (i.e., RV/motorized, tent/motorized, tent/non-motorized, remote campground accessible by trail only). The campground should include facilities for a camp host.
  - ii. Shooting Range. A shooting range may be designated and constructed in the Jonesville Management Subunit where shooting can occur safely and where impacts to fish habitat, wildlife habitat, and other outdoor recreation activities are minimized consistent with best management practices. Planning and construction of a shooting range and necessary support facilities should conform to appropriate best management practices for shooting ranges. The shooting area should have specified hours of operation and should be staffed, managed, and maintained. The shooting range should be located in an area that is accessible year-round and provides suitable barriers or backstops to catch stray projectiles. Significant baffling should be considered for firing lanes to shield from errant bullets and noise. Map 8 on the next page identifies a potential shooting range site that appears to achieve the criteria listed above; however, a more thorough feasibility analysis should be completed.
- b. Commercial Recreational Facility Development. Commercial recreational facility development is authorized in the Jonesville Management Subunit consistent with the areawide guidelines in Chapter 2. Commercial recreational facilities that are prohibited include public use cabins, restaurants, concessions, food service, lodging buildings/facilities, and hunting camps.

## MAP 8: Jonesville Subunit: Proposed Designated Shooting Area



- c. Interpretive Displays, Regulatory, & Informational Signs. Developed facilities, trails, and public use sites should include all informational and regulatory signage necessary for management and enforcement. Wishbone Lake and Slipper Lake may include interpretive displays to inform the public about the purposes of the Moose Range and JPUA, existing outdoor recreational opportunities, natural, cultural, and historic values, and unique geologic features. The displays can be used to inform the public about natural resource values and multiple use management of the natural resources. Interpretive signage along trails outside of public use sites should be limited. See the trails section in Chapter 2 for more information about trail wayfinding.
- d. Fossil Viewing. Fossil viewing is a dispersed outdoor recreational activity that is popular in the Jonesville Management Subunit. The activity may be restricted by DNR if the public's safety is endangered, if the activity interferes with coal mining operations, or if the cultural/heritage value of the resource warrants restrictions. All fossils are the property of the state, and it is unlawful to collect or remove them without the proper authorizations (AS 41.35).

## 6. Subsurface Resources

The Jonesville Management Subunit is open to locatable and leasable mineral development.

### a. Coal Lease Location.

- i. Existing Leases. The state will follow existing procedures to allow for development of high-grade coal resources on land now leased for coal development near Wishbone Hill. Map 3 (page 2-33) shows the location of the existing leases.
  - ii. Agency/Lessee Cooperation. DMLW will work actively with the lessee on the existing Wishbone Hill coal leases. DNR and ADF&G will review the mining plans of operation when the lessee submits them to the state. State agencies will follow the intent of this plan and follow established ASCMCRA procedures in approving the plans for operation. State agencies will make recommendations to minimize impacts on fish and wildlife habitat and populations.
  - iii. Wishbone Lake. Wishbone Lake will be protected, replaced, and/or remediated if impacted because of mining.
- b. Post-Mining Land Use. Post-mining land use is designated as wildlife habitat for the Wishbone Hill area coal mined lands. Reclamation must be directed to a habitat type and density which is primarily beneficial to moose consistent with ASCMCRA. DMLW will monitor coal mining and reclamation activities at Wishbone Hill according to the ASCMCRA, including the rainbow fisheries in Wishbone Lake, water quality in Moose Creek, groundwater, and air quality of the subunit.
- c. Post-Mining Roads. The location and development of mining roads will receive interagency review during the review of any new or changes to approved mining authorizations. The determination of post-mining road use will be made at that time. Roads which are designated to be used by the public will remain open after mining operations have ceased or until an agency management decision is developed to do otherwise.

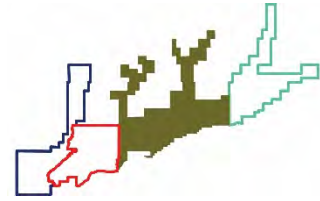
## 7. Water, Wetlands, and Waterbodies

- a. Lakeshores and Stream Corridors. Habitat enhancement efforts in riparian zones along Eska Creek, Wishbone, and Seventeen Mile Lakes may take place according to Chapter 2 buffer guidelines.
- b. Instream Flow Data Collection. ADF&G may collect instream flow data needed to inform its Title 16 permit decision-making process for Eska Creek and Moose Creek to maintain adequate flow for fish habitat. DNR DMLW shall work closely with ADF&G to identify waters where instream flow data needs to be collected associated with any work that will require permitting by either agency.
- c. Slipper Lake. The Alaska Dam Safety Program (ADSP) is evaluating Slipper Lake to determine if it is an artificially impounded lake. Aerial imagery strongly indicates that the lake has an artificial barrier that may be classified as a jurisdictional dam by state regulations (11 AAC 93). If Slipper Lake meets the jurisdictional definition of a dam, DNR will need to decide how to bring it into compliance with the ADSP. ADSP shall consult with DNR DMLW and ADF&G if Slipper Lake meets

the jurisdictional definition of a dam to determine how to bring the lake into compliance taking the following into consideration:

- i. Slipper Lake is heavily used by the public for recreation, including boating and fishing.
- ii. Slipper Lake is a popular camping location.
- iii. Slipper Lake is currently stocked by ADF&G.

# The Middle Management Subunit



## Background

The Middle Management Subunit includes portions of the following drainages in the Moose Range: Granite Creek, Young Creek, Kings River and Chickaloon River. The area has moderate-to-high values for fish and wildlife. Moose, small game, furbearers, black bear, Dall sheep and resident fish are harvested throughout the subunit by residents. Subsistence and sport harvest effort both occur but cannot be easily quantified. Wildlife viewing occurs in road or trail accessible areas of the subunit. Mature forests dominate the subunit below the 2,000-foot elevation level.

The Young Creek area and the area around Castle Mountain have known high-grade coal resources. Although the Kings River drainage contains low-grade coal, there are potentially marketable limestone deposits in the upper east side of the drainage and haydite materials near the confluence with the Matanuska River. Upper Granite Creek drainage is the only drainage in the Moose Range that does not have existing road access. This drainage also has unstable geologic conditions, rugged terrain, avalanche potential and sub-alpine and alpine vegetation.

Dispersed outdoor recreation activities occur throughout the management subunit along the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail, Young Creek Trail, and Permanente Road. The predominant scenic resources in the subunit are Granite Peak and Castle Mountain.

## Planning and Land Management Issues

Outdoor recreation use in the Middle Management Subunit is more dispersed than the Eastern or Jonesville Subunits, however as the population of the Mat-Su Valley continues to increase, the pressure for access to motorized and non-motorized recreation opportunities farther east in the Moose Range will continue to increase. Currently, there is unmanaged camping at the Kings River along the Glenn Highway. Public comments indicate that access and recreation facilities along the Glenn Highway should continue to be upgraded and improved with accompanying management and enforcement.

## Land Use Designations

State land will be managed consistent with its designation(s); as specifically articulated through management intent described below and applicable goals and management guidelines found in Chapters 2 and 3. Some lands have one designation while other lands are co-designated for a variety of uses. Table 3 provides a quick reference of the designations and co-designations used in this management subunit, and the acreages of designation(s). Refer to Map 9 on page 3-32.

*Table 3: Middle Management Subunit Designations and Acreages*

<i>Designation or Co-Designation</i>	<i>Abbreviation</i>	<i>Acreage</i>
<i>M1: Habitat, Public Recreation Dispersed</i>	<i>Ha, Rd</i>	<i>38,305</i>
<i>M2: Habitat, Public Recreation Dispersed, Forestry</i>	<i>Ha, Rd, F</i>	<i>10,611</i>

## Management Intent

**Unit M1: Ha, Rd.** The management intent for Unit M1 is to maintain, improve and enhance fish and wildlife habitat. The management intent for the upper Granite Creek drainage (the area north of Sec. 36, T20N, R3E) is to emphasize minimal changes in its existing condition due to the unstable geologic conditions, rugged terrain and fragile sub-alpine or alpine vegetation. There will be no new trail or road development into upper Granite Creek.

Dispersed outdoor recreational opportunities will be maintained throughout Unit M1. There are a variety of roadside recreational sites with varying levels of developed infrastructure including parking areas, trailheads, campgrounds, restrooms, and picnicking facilities that provide access to the Moose Range. The management intent is that these facilities will continue to be improved, managed, and maintained to safely accommodate users, protect habitat and natural resources, and decrease impacts to private property while serving as key access to the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail and accessible drainages within the subunit.

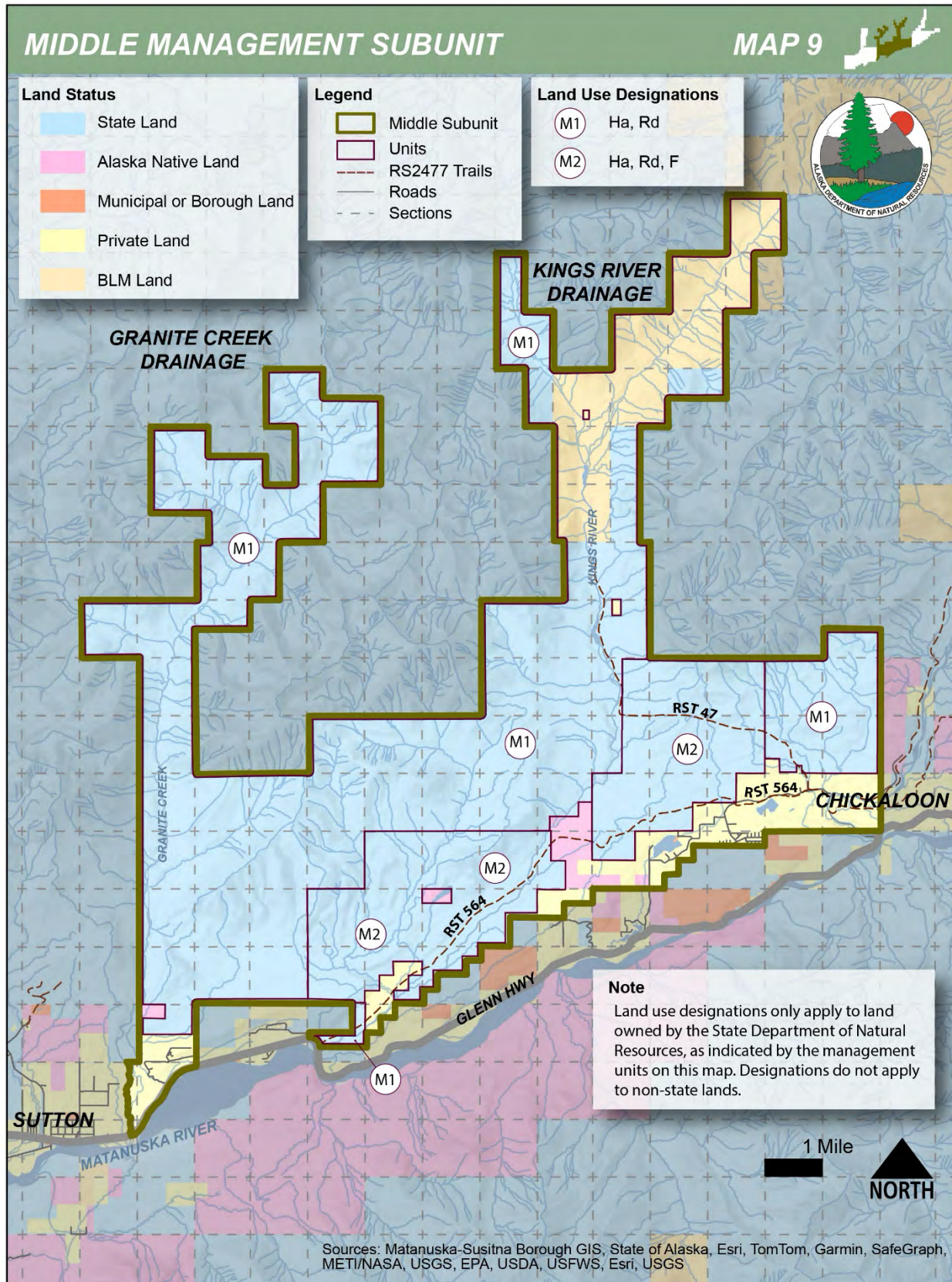
There are potentially marketable limestone and haydite materials along the Kings River. To accommodate material development, Unit M1 will remain open to locatable mineral entry and will be available for the development of leasable minerals, except for the southern face of Castle Mountain and wildlife mineral licks. The southern face of Castle Mountain is closed to locatable mineral entry and will not be available for the exploration or development of leasable minerals.

There are areas in this unit where grazing may be authorized under the guidelines of this plan, however grazing will not be authorized along a portion of the east fork of Granite Creek, north of Little Granite Creek, due to unstable slopes and possible conflicts with Dall sheep concentrations.

**Unit M2: Ha, Rd, F.** Same intent as Unit M1 with the following addition:

Due to the good potential for improved access, the mature forests below 2,000 feet along Young Creek, Kings River and the base of Castle Mountain will be managed for habitat enhancement through timber harvest and other applicable methods. Timber harvest is allowed only if the activity enhances fish and wildlife habitat.

# MAP 9: Middle Management Subunit



## Subunit Management Guidelines

### 1. Access and Trails

#### a. Public Use of Existing Access.

- i. Maintenance of Existing Access. The state should ensure access to public rights-of-way and easements for public access along the Permanente Road, the Fish Lake Subdivision Road, the Castle Mountain Mine Road, the Chickaloon River Road, the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail, the Chickaloon River Trail and the Young Creek Trail, and to public lands along the Fish Lake Subdivision.
- ii. Access Priorities. DNR should verify legal access for the Chickaloon River Trail and the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail according to Chapter 2 guidelines. If acquisition of access is required, DNR may pursue this process as time and staffing allows. Relocation of the Chickaloon River Trail north of private land through state lands will be allowed following the criteria outlined in 11 AAC 51.100 to provide an alternative trail if necessary.
- iii. Access to Little Granite Creek Bench. Access to trails is often blocked by private lands. Public access to the Little Granite Creek bench is important for providing outdoor recreational opportunities such as hunting, and for future moose management of the Moose Range. There is an existing private access road to the bench that is blocked to public use. Private land on the bench also blocks public access to public land beyond. Public access to the Little Granite Creek Bench should be pursued.
- iv. Areas with Active Assertion. DNR should continue researching the validity of a public right-of-way on roads and trails and follow Chapter 2 guidelines for making a right-of-way assertion wherever necessary and possible.

#### b. New Access. Construction of new trails and roads into the upper Granite Creek drainage (the area north of Sec. 36, T2CN, R3E) shall be prohibited for recreation, timber management, or wildlife enhancement activities<sup>14</sup>. Foot and helicopter access will be used to access the upper drainage for habitat enhancement if necessary to maintain a wildlife species.

#### c. Trails. In addition to the areawide management guidelines established for trails in Chapter 2, the following guidelines are specific to the Middle Management Subunit.

- i. Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina, Chickaloon River, and Young Creek Trails. These trails should be maintained at their existing functional level and not be substantially upgraded or improved (except sustainable trail work to reestablish foot use on the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina and Chickaloon River Trails is allowed if necessary). Access will remain open to the public for existing uses, including hunting and trapping activities. Timber harvest or habitat enhancement activities along these trails will follow the Chapter 2 guidelines on buffers. Signs may be placed along the trails as necessary to inform the public of legal access, mark the proper trail route, and help keep the public from trespassing on private lands.
- ii. Trail Kiosks, Signage, and Wayfinding. Trailhead maps, kiosks, wayfinding signage, and trail use information may be developed. Signs will clearly display trail use information,

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<sup>14</sup> This management guideline requires the promulgation of regulations for implementation.

regulatory information, and allowed trail uses. Wayfinding and trail use signs may be used to appropriately guide trails users; however, their use should be minimal.

- d. Trailheads. After the completion of a Trails Management Plan, DNR may consider authorizing trailheads on either end of the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail that are managed, maintained, consistent with adjacent land uses, and provide legal and accessible access.

## 2. Cultural and Heritage Resources

- a. Known Sites. There are seven known heritage resources on the Alaska Heritage Resources Survey Record in the Middle Management Subunit. These sites will be managed according to the guidelines in Chapter 2. There are multiple old cabins in Chickaloon and on Drill Lake. As time and funding allows, SHPO may work with private landowners to evaluate their importance and determine, alongside the property owner, if additional steps for protection are necessary.
- b. Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail. SHPO may pursue funding to review and propose the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail and the Chickaloon River Trail for the National Register of Historic Places.
- c. Undiscovered Sites.
  - i. Newly Located Sites. The state, through DPOR and DGGs, will protect and interpret any significant cultural or historic features further identified in this subunit as funding and staffing capability permits.
  - ii. Survey Priorities. The Chickaloon townsite, the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail corridor, and the Permanente Road all have moderate to high potential for heritage resources and should be surveyed prior to any development.
  - iii. Wickman Cabin. Working with the private owner, SHPO may evaluate the Carl Wickman cabin and barn on Drill Lake to determine its heritage resource value. Recommendations as to its use or protection should be made available to the private owner.

## 3. Fish & Wildlife

- a. Resource Management. This subunit will be managed primarily to maintain, protect and, if necessary, enhance the following fish and wildlife resources and habitats:
  - i. Moose throughout the subunit.
  - ii. Ruffed grouse throughout the subunit.
  - iii. Brown bear in upper Granite Creek and Young Creek.
  - iv. Black bear habitat throughout the subunit.
  - v. Dall sheep winter and summer ranges.
  - vi. Caribou in the northernmost, montane portions of the subunit.
  - vii. Mineral Licks.
  - viii. Riparian habitats and instream flow along the following drainages: Granite Creek, Young Creek, Kings River and lower Chickaloon River.
  - ix. Chinook, coho, and chum salmon and Dolly Varden in Granite Creek and Kings River.
  - x. Pink salmon in Granite Creek.
  - xi. Chinook and coho salmon in the Chickaloon River.

- xii. Rainbow trout in Chain Lakes, Kings River, Fish Lake, and Ruby Lake.
  - xiii. Bald eagle nests along lower Granite Creek.
  - xiv. Primary attention will be given to maintenance or enhancement of moose summer and winter concentration areas, fall harvest areas, and rutting concentrations area.
  - xv. And other species and habitats identified by ADF&G.
- b. Fish and Wildlife Utilization. The subunit will be managed to allow continuation of the following activities:
- i. Hunting of big and small game and trapping throughout the subunit.
  - ii. Sportfishing for anadromous, resident, and stocked fish.
  - iii. Wildlife viewing throughout the subunit.
- c. Fisheries. ADF&G will maintain, protect, and enhance, as appropriate, the fisheries and habitats of Granite Creek, Young Creek, Kings River, the Chickaloon River, and Chain Lakes. To accomplish this, ADF&G may conduct spawning and escapement surveys, monitor trends in harvest angler effort, and develop recommendations for field investigations and/or Board of Fisheries consideration, as time and funds allow. ADF&G will adjust stocking levels in stocked lakes based on health and survival of stocked fish and changes in use patterns and pursuant to the annual public review of the statewide stocking plan. ADF&G will manage sport fisheries for sustained yield and angler satisfaction, work closely with enforcement staff in adherence to regulations, and assist in habitat conservation and restoration.
- d. Habitat Enhancement. Habitat enhancement may be considered in this subunit and shall follow management guidelines in Chapter 2.

#### 4. Forestry

- a. Timber Harvest. Timber harvest operations that enhance fish and wildlife habitat may be authorized in the Middle Management Subunit. Specific sales locations and dates will be identified by DOF&FP in consultation with ADF&G. Commercial timber harvests will occur in areas where cost effectiveness and habitat enhancement methods justify such harvests.
- i. Schedule. The schedule for forest product harvest in the Middle Management Subunit should be identified by DOF&FP in consultation with ADF&G.
  - ii. Elevation. No timber shall be harvested above 1,100 feet elevation except for habitat enhancement purposes.
  - iii. Buffers. See Buffer guidelines in Chapter 2.

#### 5. Grazing

Grazing Prohibited. In addition to the guidelines in Chapter 2 and due to potential conflict with Dall sheep and unstable soils, livestock grazing shall be prohibited in an area north of Little Granite Creek and east of Granite Creek<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> This management guideline requires the promulgation of regulations for implementation.

## 6. Public Use Sites

There are no identified Public Use Sites in the Middle Management Subunit.

## 7. Recreation

### a. State Recreation and Camping Roadside Facilities.

- i. Kings River Campground. DMLW should consider authorizing development, maintenance, and management of a campground facility at Kings River. The site could be at least 200 acres in size and include the bluff and usable land within the proposed site and the land that lies east of the Glenn Highway right-of-way in the NE1/4, E1/2NW1/4 and N1/2S1/2 Sec. 16, T19N, R4E S.M. Before issuing an authorization, a proposed campground site plan should be developed that analyzes the floodplain and provides for public access to the adjoining Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina and Young Creek trail systems.
  - ii. King Mountain State Recreation Site. Although outside the boundary of the Moose Range, the King Mountain State Recreation Site provides an opportunity for camping in the vicinity of the Moose Range.
- b. Interpretive Displays. Site development plans for a campground at Kings River and King Mountain Recreation Site may provide for interpretation related to the Moose Range. Interpretive displays may also be installed at other trailheads within the subunit.
  - c. Fossil Viewing. Fossil viewing is a dispersed outdoor recreational activity that is popular in the Middle Management Subunit. The activity may be restricted by DNR if the public's safety is endangered, if the activity interferes with coal mining operations, or if the cultural/heritage value of the resource warrants restrictions. All fossils are the property of the state and it is unlawful to collect or remove them without the proper authorizations (AS 41.35).
  - d. Whitewater Boating. DNR may authorize the development of infrastructure to support whitewater boating on the Chickaloon River.

## 8. Subsurface Resources

Mineral Closures. The southern face of Castle Mountain is closed to locatable mineral entry and is not available for the exploration or development of leasable minerals.

## 9. Water, Wetlands, and Waterbodies

- a. Lakeshores and Stream Corridors. Habitat enhancement efforts in riparian zones along Granite and Young Creek and Kings River and in the vicinity of all lakes in the subunit will take place according to the Chapter 2 guidelines on buffers.
- b. Wetland Buffers. A buffer will be retained around the 160-acre wetland on Little Granite Creek Bench as described in Chapter 2 guidelines on buffers.
- c. Instream Flow Data Collection. ADF&G may collect instream flow data needed to inform its Title 16 permit decision-making process for Granite Creek, Young Creek, Kings River, and Chickaloon River to maintain adequate flow for fish habitat. DNR DMLW shall work closely with ADF&G to identify waters where instream flow data needs to be collected associated with any work that will require permitting by either agency.

# The Eastern Management Subunit



## Background

The Eastern Management Subunit includes the portion of the Moose Range that lies east of R5E, S.M. and includes most of the Chickaloon River drainage and a portion of the Boulder Creek drainage. The area has high-to-moderate values for fish and wildlife. Moose, small game, furbearers, black bear, Dall sheep and resident fish are harvested by residents. Subsistence and sport harvest effort both occur but cannot be readily separated or quantified. Wildlife viewing mostly occurs in road or trail accessible areas. Unlike the Western, Jonesville, or Middle Management Subunits, this subunit has low-to-moderate timber grades along the lower Chickaloon River and lower Boulder Creek. The Eastern Management Subunit has moderate coal grade, located near Anthracite Ridge.

Public lands in this subunit have moderate-to-high values for dispersed outdoor recreation. Most use occurs along the existing Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail, the Chickaloon River Trail, the Boulder Creek Trail and on the Chickaloon River. The Chickaloon River provides a highly valued remote wilderness Class II, III, and IV whitewater boating opportunity in southcentral Alaska.

## Planning and Land Management Issues

Outdoor recreation use in the Eastern Management Subunit is the most dispersed in the Moose Range, however, as the population of the Mat-Su Valley continues to increase, the pressure for access to motorized and non-motorized recreation opportunities farther east in the Moose Range will continue to increase. Comments indicate that access and recreation facilities at the Glenn Highway should continue to be upgraded and improved with accompanying management and enforcement.

## Land Use Designations

State land will be managed consistent with its designation(s); as specifically articulated through management intent described below and applicable goals and management guidelines found in Chapters 2 and 3. Some lands have one designation while other lands are co-designated for a variety of uses. Table 4 provides a quick reference of the designations and co-designations used in this management subunit, and the acreages of designation(s). Refer to Map 10 on page 3-39.

**Table 4: Eastern Management Subunit Designations and Acreages**

<i>Designation or Co-Designation</i>	<i>Abbreviation</i>	<i>Acreage</i>
<i>E1: Habitat, Public Recreation-Dispersed</i>	<i>Ha, Rd</i>	<i>22,794</i>
<i>E2: Habitat, Public Recreation Dispersed, Forestry</i>	<i>Ha, Rd, F</i>	<i>3,482</i>

## Management Intent

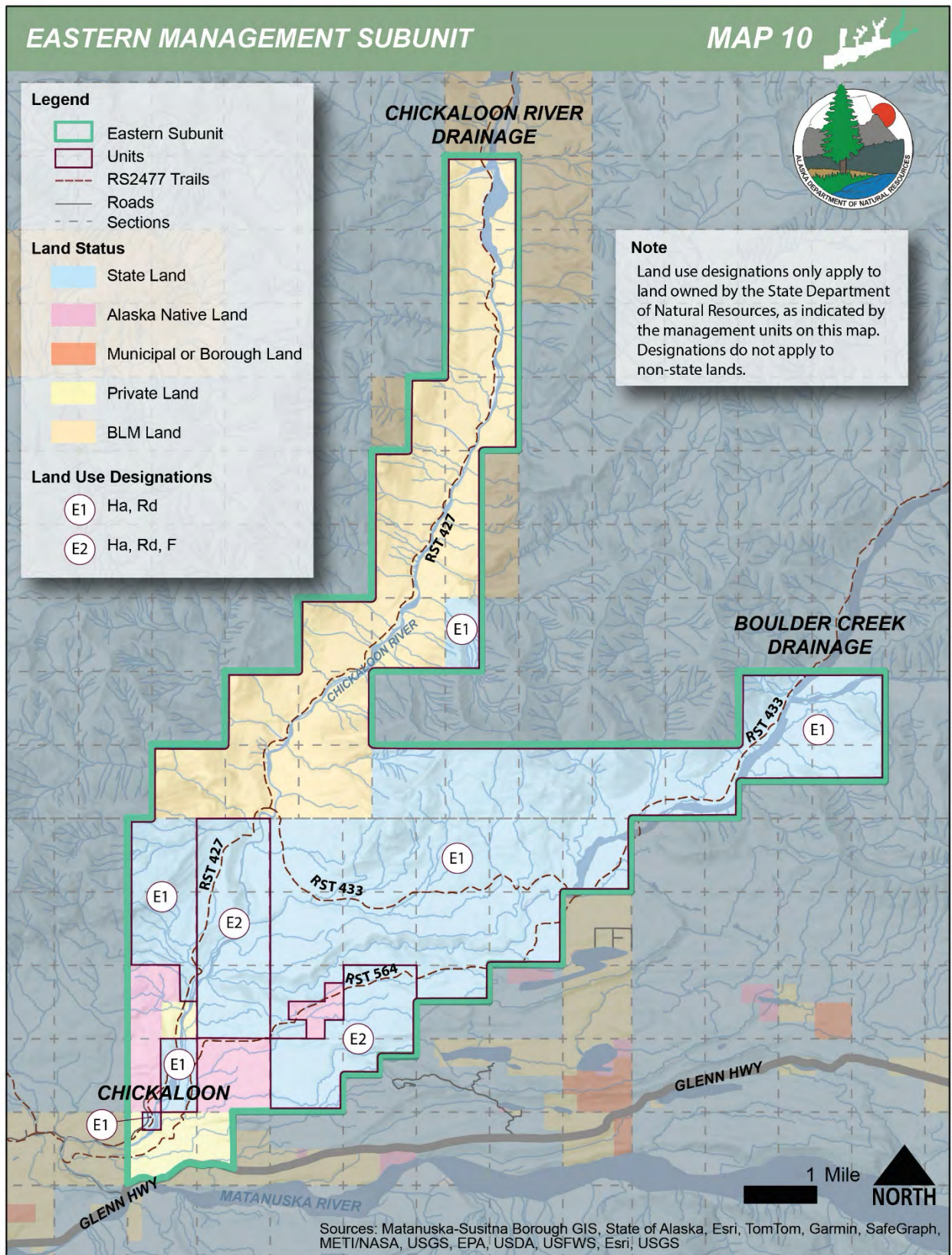
**Unit E1: Ha, Rd.** The management intent for Unit E1 is to maintain, improve, and enhance fish and wildlife habitat. Manage the unit to protect and maintain fish and wildlife habitat and associated wetlands, streams and waterbodies. Additionally, Unit E1 will be managed for dispersed outdoor

recreational activities. Popular activities such as hunting big and small game, trapping, wildlife viewing, horseback riding, hiking, skiing, winter biking, and fishing will continue.

**Unit E2: Ha, Rd, F.** Same intent as Unit E1 with the following addition:

There is a local need for personal firewood, and this need may be met to the extent possible by improving fish and wildlife habitat in conjunction with timber harvest. There is a limited supply of timber in the unit and timber harvest is allowed only if the activity enhances fish and wildlife habitat.

# MAP 10: Eastern Management Subunit



## Subunit Management Guidelines

### 1. Access and Trails

- a. Public Use of Existing Access. The state should ensure access to public rights-of-way and easements for public access to the Eastern Management Subunit from the Glenn Highway and Chickaloon River Road through a network of trail systems. The public has traditionally used these trails to access public land for outdoor recreational and commercial purposes. The state will verify and assert public rights-of-way as needed.
- b. Areas with Active Assertion. The state will continue researching the validity of a public right-of-way on roads and trails and follow Chapter 2 guidelines for making a right-of-way assertion wherever necessary and possible.
- c. Trails. The areawide management guidelines to establish a Trail Management Plan shall be followed in the Eastern Management Subunit.
  - i. Access on Native Allotments and ANCSA Lands. DNR will coordinate with the BLM to provide public access through native allotments and native selected lands.
  - ii. Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail, Old 98 Trail, and Boulder Creek Trail. Continued public access on these trails provides vital links to the public lands in the Eastern Subunit of the Moose Range and is essential to management.
- d. Trailheads. After the completion of a Trails Management Plan, DNR may consider authorizing trailheads on either end of the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail that are managed, maintained, consistent with adjacent land uses, and provide legal and accessible access.

### 2. Cultural and Heritage Resources

- a. Known Sites. There is one known heritage site on the Alaska Heritage Resources Survey Record in the Eastern Management Subunit. This site will be managed according to the guidelines in Chapter 2.
- b. Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail and Chickaloon River Trail. SHPO may pursue funding to review and propose the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail and the Chickaloon River Trail for the National Register of Historic Places.
- c. Undiscovered Sites. It is likely that there are other cultural resources in the vicinity of the Old Chickaloon townsite and along the Chickaloon River Trail, the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail and the Old 98 Trail. Trails up the Boulder Creek drainage may also have high heritage resource values. Areas in the Eastern Management Subunit designated by SHPO as known high potential areas for containing heritage resources may be surveyed for heritage values as funding and staffing allows.

### 3. Fish & Wildlife Habitat

- a. Resource Management. This subunit will be managed primarily to maintain, protect and, if necessary, enhance the following fish and wildlife resources and habitats:
  - i. Moose throughout the subunit.
  - ii. Ruffed grouse throughout the subunit.
  - iii. Brown bear and black bear throughout the subunit.

- iv. Dall sheep habitat throughout the subunit and lambing in the Puddingstone Hill area.
  - v. Caribou in the middle and upper Chickaloon and Boulder Creek drainages.
  - vi. Wolves in the middle and upper reaches of the drainages.
  - vii. Chum salmon, grayling, rainbow trout, and Dolly Varden in Chickaloon River.
  - viii. Dolly Varden and grayling in the Boulder Creek drainage.
  - ix. Riparian habitats and instream flow along the Chickaloon River and Boulder Creek.
  - x. Other species and habitats identified by ADF&G.
- b. Fish and Wildlife Utilization. The subunit will be managed to allow continuation of the following activities:
- i. Hunting of big and small game and trapping throughout the subunit.
  - ii. Sportfishing for anadromous, resident, and stocked fish.
  - iii. Wildlife viewing throughout the subunit.
- c. Protection of Mineral Licks. There are mineral licks located in the Eastern Management Subunit. Verify the location with ADF&G. Mineral licks are used by significant numbers of wildlife primarily during the spring and early summer. The area around the lick should be protected for its wildlife value. Stipulations should be developed on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with ADF&G, for authorizations. The stipulations should address the following:
- i. The avoidance of direct and indirect impact on the mineral lick, the animal tracks leading to them and other areas of concentrated animal use that is associated with the mineral lick;
  - ii. Consult with ADF&G for their specific locations.
- d. Fisheries. ADF&G will maintain, protect, and enhance, as appropriate, the fisheries and habitats in the Chickaloon River, Boulder Creek, and other waters. To accomplish this, ADF&G may conduct spawning and escapement surveys, monitor trends in harvest angler effort, and develop recommendations for field investigations and/or Board of Fisheries consideration, as time and funds allow. ADF&G will adjust stocking levels in stocked lakes based on health and survival of stocked fish and changes in use patterns and pursuant to the annual public review of the statewide stocking plan. ADF&G will manage sport fisheries for sustained yield and angler satisfaction, work closely with enforcement staff in adherence to regulations, and assist in habitat conservation and restoration.
- e. Habitat Enhancement. Habitat enhancement may be considered in this subunit and shall follow management guidelines in Chapter 2.

#### 4. Forestry

- a. Timber Harvest. The Eastern Management Subunit has small pockets of moderate timber value along the Chickaloon River, below 2,200 feet. Much of the subunit has limited timber potential. In the subunit, because of its poorer soil types, limited vegetation, and poor access, the management emphasis will be on maintenance of wildlife habitat rather than active timber management.

- i. Enhancement Considerations. Habitat enhancement is desirable for this area. The state will apply the most appropriate techniques available. Any active habitat enhancement requires DNR and ADF&G approval.
- ii. Schedule. Although timber harvest has not been a priority in the Eastern Management Subunit, any future schedules for forest product harvest in the Eastern Management Subunit should be identified by DOF&FP in consultation with ADF&G.
- iii. Buffers. See Buffer guidelines in Chapter 2.

## 5. Grazing

- a. Future Authorizations. Grazing authorizations will not be issued in the Eastern Management Subunit due to the limited availability of grass resources for grazing.

## 6. Public Use Sites

There are no identified Public Use Sites in the Eastern Management Subunit.

## 7. Recreation

- a. State Recreation, Camping, and Trailhead/Roadside Facilities.
  - i. Long Lake State Recreation Site. Although outside the boundary of the Moose Range, the Long Lake State Recreation Site provides an opportunity for camping in the vicinity of the Moose Range.
  - ii. Purinton Creek. Although outside of the Moose Range, one of the key access points to the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail is Purinton Creek at the Glenn Highway. DMLW may support efforts to improve access at this location including parking, restroom facilities, and signage.
- b. Interpretive Displays. The Long Lake State Recreation Site and other roadside/trailhead facilities may provide for interpretation related to the Moose Range. Interpretive displays may also be installed at other trailheads within the subunit.
- c. Whitewater Boating. DNR may authorize the development of infrastructure to support whitewater boating on the Chickaloon River.

## 8. Subsurface Resources

- a. Locatable and Leasable Mineral Entry. The Eastern Management Subunit is open to locatable and leasable mineral development.
  - i. Coal. The Eastern Management Subunit contains limited pockets of moderate to high grade coal resources, which would be difficult and expensive to develop. The plan does not preclude development of this coal for the long-term; however, development is not recommended.
  - ii. Other Minerals. The Eastern Management Subunit is open to locatable and leasable mineral development, except for the mineral lick area (see 8b, below).
- b. Mineral Licks. There are mineral licks located in the Eastern Management Unit that are closed to mineral entry. DNR should consult with ADF&G to verify their location.

9. Water, Wetlands, and Waterbodies

- a. Lakeshores and Stream Corridors. Habitat enhancement efforts in riparian zones along the Chickaloon River and Boulder Creek shall take place according to Chapter 2 guidelines on buffers.
- b. Wetland Buffers. A buffer will be maintained around the wetlands in the area of Simpson's cabin on the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail as described in the Chapter 2 Wetland buffer guidelines.
- c. Instream Flow Data Collection. ADF&G may collect instream flow data needed to inform its Title 16 permit decision-making process for the Chickaloon River and Boulder Creek to maintain adequate flow for fish habitat. DNR DMLW shall work closely with ADF&G to identify waters where instream flow data needs to be collected associated with any work that will require permitting by either agency.

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# Chapter 4 : Implementation

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## Introduction

This chapter provides the basis for the management of uses and resources within the Moose Range and JPUA. It describes the management actions necessary to implement components of the plan. It also explains the relationship between the plan, proposed regulations, and those regulations that will be promulgated after the adoption of the plan. Chapter 4 also describes the relationship between this planning document and other existing state, federal, and borough plans. The procedures for plan review and amendment are also included.

## General Management of Moose Range and JPUA Lands

DNR will implement the Moose Range and Jonesville Public Use Area Management Plan based on authorities as described in AS 16.20.340-360 (Moose Range) and AS 41.23.280-289 (JPUA), Title 38 of the Alaska Statutes and associated regulations. This plan serves as the basis for the management of uses and resources within the Moose Range and JPUA planning boundary.

All state lands will be managed consistent with the purposes provided in AS 16.20.340 and AS 41.23.280 and with the more specific guidance provided in this plan. Regulations necessary to implement management guidelines in the plan should be developed after plan adoption.

## Trail Management Plan

DNR should, as time and funding allow, initiate a Trail Management Plan (TMP) after the approval of this plan to identify existing trails and assess the level and impact of current use. The TMP should establish trail management objectives for trails that are to be managed and maintained. The TMP should also identify where additional trails are needed to enhance recreational user opportunities or reduce negative effects.

Details of the TMP are included in Appendix C.

## Relationship to the Guidance in Previous Area Plans

This Moose Range and JPUA Management Plan provides an overall update to the Matanuska Valley Moose Range Management Plan that was adopted in 1986. As two legislatively designated areas, both the Moose Range and the JPUA will be guided by this one management plan. Specific guidance for the JPUA that is consistent with its enabling legislation is provided in both the areawide management guidelines for the Moose Range and more specifically in the Jonesville Subunit management guidelines.

A small section of state land was legislatively designated as the JPUA but was not within the boundary of the Moose Range. This management plan will supersede all current management direction now provided by the Susitna Matanuska Area Plan (SMAP). This plan will also reclassify state lands previously classified by area plans within the boundary of the Moose Range and JPUA.

## State Land Classification

To implement the plan on state lands, DNR must classify state lands to reflect the intent of land use designations made by this plan. According to state statute, classification means the designation of lands according to their apparent best use. It identifies the primary use for which the land will be managed, but all other uses are initially presumed as compatible with the primary use. For this reason, all plan classifications are intended for multiple uses. In this plan more than one designation is identified for each management unit; these are termed co-designations. Co-designations indicate that two or more uses are considered to be compatible with a specific management unit of state land.

Following is a list of land classifications, and their associated definitions in Alaska regulations (the Alaska Administrative Code – AAC), which will apply to state lands in the planning area as a result of plan adoption. DNR will manage state lands and resources consistent with these classifications and with the management directions given in Chapter 3 for specific management subunits of state land.

**11 AAC 55.055. Coal Land.** Land classified coal is land where known coal resources exist and where development is occurring or is reasonably likely to occur, or where the coal potential has been determined to be high or moderate under 11.AAC 85.010.

**11 AAC 55.070. Forest Land.** Land classified forest is land that is or has been forested and is suited for forest management because of its physical, climatic, and vegetative conditions.

**11 AAC 55.160. Public Recreation Land.** Land classified public recreation is land that is suitable for recreation uses, waysides, parks, campsites, scenic overlooks, hunting, fishing or boating access sites, trail corridors, or greenbelts along bodies of water or roadways.

**11 AAC 55.230. Wildlife Habitat Land.** Land classified wildlife habitat is land which is primarily valuable for:

(1) fish and wildlife resource production, whether existing or through habitat manipulation, to supply sufficient numbers or diversity of species to support commercial, recreational, or traditional uses on an optimum sustained yield basis; or

(2) a unique or rare assemblage of a single or multiple species of regional, state, or national significance.

## Relationship of Land Use Designations in the Plan to State Land Classifications

State land classifications contain no specific land management directives; those directives are expressed using land use designations in the plan and described in detail for Management Subunits included in Chapter 3. However, the designations used in the area plan must be converted into land classifications outlined in state regulation (11 AAC 55) that reflect the intent of the plan. Since plan designations are central to the management of state land in this plan, knowledge of the amount of area associated with particular designations is important, allowing a comparison between the designated uses. Table 5

identifies the acreage associated with the designations recommended in this plan. Descriptions of each of the following designations are also provided at the beginning of Chapter 3.

***Table 5: Acreages Associated with Land Designations and Co-Designations***

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Designation</i>	<i>Acreage</i>
<i>Ha, Rd</i>	<i>Habitat, Public Recreation Dispersed</i>	<i>90,492</i>
<i>Ha, Rd, F</i>	<i>Habitat, Public Recreation Dispersed, Forestry</i>	<i>16,306</i>
<i>Co, Ha, Rd</i>	<i>Coal, Habitat, Public Recreation Dispersed</i>	<i>6,372</i>
<i>Co, Rp</i>	<i>Coal, Recreation-Public Use Site</i>	<i>3,332</i>

The conversion of land use designations used by this plan into state land classifications is indicated in the table below. These are intended to identify the allowable uses of state land consistent with the classification definitions described previously and with any management intent given in Chapter 3.

***Table 6: Land Designations – Conversion to Classifications***

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Designation</i>	<i>Classification</i>
<i>Co</i>	<i>Coal</i>	<i>Coal Land</i>
<i>F</i>	<i>Forest</i>	<i>Forest Land</i>
<i>Ha</i>	<i>Habitat</i>	<i>Wildlife Habitat Land</i>
<i>Rd</i>	<i>Public Recreation-Dispersed</i>	<i>Public Recreation Land</i>
<i>Rp</i>	<i>Public Recreation-Public Use Site</i>	<i>Public Recreation Land</i>

## Land Classification Order

Classification of the lands within the Moose Range and JPUA is required under AS 38.04.065 and AS 38.05.300 and is necessary for certain authorizations issued by DNR. Appendix B includes a Land Classification Order (LCO). The LCO rescinds all previous classifications within the Moose Range and JPUA and consolidates and supersedes all the various LCOs that preceded this planning effort.

***Table 7: Acreages Associated with Land Classifications and Co-Classifications***

<i>Classification</i>	<i>Acreage</i>
<i>Wildlife Habitat/Public Recreation Land</i>	<i>90,492</i>
<i>Wildlife Habitat/Public Recreation/Forest Land</i>	<i>16,306</i>
<i>Coal/Wildlife Habitat/Public Recreation Land</i>	<i>6,372</i>
<i>Coal/Public Recreation Land</i>	<i>3,332</i>

## Applicability of Plan Designations/Classifications to State Lands Not Identified in the Plan Text or Plan Maps

This section deals with those lands that are not designated in this Plan or classified in the Land Classification Order. Such lands include those state lands inadvertently omitted in the Moose Range and JPUA Plan and those lands that may be acquired by the state in the future but not designated or classified in this Plan. The state has acquired and will continue to acquire isolated parcels of land. The

purpose of this section is to give direction regarding the designation of these lands by the Department when future issues of parcel classification and management arise. If state land is identified after the adoption of this plan that is not state selected land identified herein, and the requirements of this section are followed, a formal plan amendment or revision of the Land Classification Order is not required.

The following guidelines of plan designation/classification are to apply:

- Parcels In or Near Existing Communities. If the parcel is in or is immediately adjacent to an existing community or past state land offering, the designation of Settlement and classification of Settlement Land apply. Such land can be considered for disposal use unless it is appropriate as a site(s) for schools, material sites, roads, parks, or other similar public use. Unsold lots identified for disposal in existing subdivisions and lots that return to state ownership will be available for lease, sale, or conveyance. Tracts identified for community purposes in existing subdivisions will not be sold but may be conveyed to municipalities or homeowner associations if they are not needed for state purposes and community purposes will be protected.
- Parcels Near Other State Land. If the parcel adjoins or is surrounded by other state land, the designation of the area(s) applies. It is to be managed according to the management intent and guidelines applicable to the adjacent lands. If there are two different designations of the abutting parcels, the designation of the larger parcel shall apply. Such lands can be considered appropriate for disposal if they are designated Settlement unless it is appropriate as a site(s) for schools, material sites, roads, parks, or other similar public use. They may also be conveyed to a municipality even if it is suitable for these public uses as long as the proposed uses are for comparable municipal (public) use.
- Newly Acquired State Lands. Lands that were acquired proactively through exchange, purchase, or other methods will be managed and classified consistent with the purposes for which they were acquired. If the purpose of the acquired land cannot be determined with precision, the designation of abutting or surrounding land will apply to the newly acquired parcels of state land. If there are no abutting or surrounding lands, then the designation of Habitat/Public Recreation-Dispersed will apply.
- Other Lands. If the designation/classification of a parcel of acquired or omitted state land cannot be adequately determined, the parcel is to be designated Habitat/Public Recreation-Dispersed.

## State Land Selections

### State Land Selections

Under the Statehood Act, Alaska is entitled to approximately 103 million acres of federal land. The selections made by the state in the planning area occurred under the General Grant and Community Grant programs, and much of the original state selections of federal land have been either conveyed to the state through patent or are in Tentative Approval (TA) status, which gives management authority to the state. However, there are a large number of state selections remaining that must be adjudicated by

the BLM, and it is uncertain as to when the adjudication of state selections will occur. Many of these selections are within areas also selected by Native corporations and until BLM adjudication has been completed some land ownership patterns in this planning area will remain uncertain. Some areas noted as BLM land on the plan maps or plan text indicate those areas of federal land selected for eventual conveyance to the state.

There may be areas of state selections that this plan has not identified. In these instances, land conveyed to the state is to be considered classified under this plan and land classification order. In instances where a plan designation has not been specifically assigned to a state selection, classifications are to be assigned according to the standards described in the previous section, Applicability of Plan Designations/Classifications to State Lands Not Identified in the Plan Text or Plan Maps. Land designated or classified according to these requirements does not require a formal plan amendment or change to the LCO.

DNR adjudicators must review the status of state land at the time of an adjudicatory decision. It would be imprudent to rely upon the land status information contained in this plan given the changing character of state land selections. Consult DNR Alaska Mapper for the most recent state selection information.

### ANILCA Top Filed Lands

There are certain areas that are top filed by the state under the provisions of Sec. 906 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). These are selections made by the state that become valid when Native regional or village ANCSA (Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act) selections are relinquished. It is uncertain how many of these state selections will become valid during the planning period because the amount of Native selections, in terms of acreage, greatly exceeds that allowed under the corporation's selection entitlement and the adjudication process of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has slowed appreciably. BLM is currently adjudicating all prioritized Native village and regional corporation selections so the corporations and state can receive their land. The category of "BLM Land" on plan maps includes areas of ANILCA top filed selections in addition to areas of state-selected land.

The same caution in the use of plan maps for ANILCA top filed lands as for state land selections exist (see above), and the same procedures for classification are to be followed for areas of top filed lands that ultimately become state land but were not identified on the plan maps. See 'State Land Selections' above.

### Enforcement

As funding allows, DNR should identify a Land Manager dedicated to the Moose Range and JPUA and work with the Department of Public Safety (DPS) and local law enforcement agencies to carry out law enforcement responsibilities within the Moose Range and JPUA. DNR may pursue authorizing employees as peace officers with authority in the Moose Range and JPUA; this authority was granted through AS 41.23.288. Regulations necessary to implement the plan will be developed after the adoption of the plan.

## Title 38 Requirements

The legislation enacting the Moose Range and JPUA mandated the creation of a plan to act as the basis for management. The legislation does not rescind Title 38 authorities related to public lands management. These authorities apply to the Moose Range and JPUA except where a conflict exists between the enabling legislation, regulations, or specific guidelines contained in the management plan. In these instances, the management plan is the controlling document. This management plan has been written to avoid such conflicts, so it is envisioned that this situation will rarely occur. All lands within the planning area are managed consistent with Alaska Statutes contained in Title 38, applicable regulations in 11 AAC, and existing policies except as they are amended or superseded by this planning document and subsequent regulations.

## Authority of Management Plan

DNR management plans, once adopted, are the legally binding policy for the management of state land and resources, and they direct permitting, leasing, and other decisions made by DNR. Staff must follow DNR management plans when adjudicating authorizations for the use of state land.

Plans adopted by the borough Assembly under MSB 15.24.030 (Comprehensive Plans and Purpose) provide the basis for implementing land use regulations. The borough could adopt land use regulations to support the implementation of this plan once it's been adopted by the Commissioners of DNR and ADF&G.

## Allowed and Prohibited Uses

All uses that are consistent with administrative regulations and the management guidelines of this plan are allowed. Prohibited uses are described in the Unit-Specific Management Guidelines in Chapter 3.

## Proposed Regulations

Regulations will be developed through a public process with an opportunity to review and provide comments on draft regulations. DNR may determine that additional regulations are necessary at some future date for management of the Moose Range and JPUA consistent with this plan, statute, or regulation. Some recommendations in this plan can only be implemented through regulation.

Recommendations in this Management Plan that will require regulations include, but are not limited to:

1. Motorized use in the Western Management Subunit is only allowed on designated, hardened routes with established stream crossings.
2. Limit the speed of motorized vehicles and boats in public use sites.
3. Restrict horsepower of boats on Slipper Lake.
4. Prohibit the discharge of firearms in the Moose Range and JPUA, except for lawful hunting and trapping.
5. Restrictions on camping and discharge of firearms within public use sites.
6. Establishment of the days and hours of operation for shooting ranges.

## Fees

This plan supports the institution of a fee program to pay for facilities and management of the Moose Range and JPUA. DNR may recommend to the Legislature that a fee schedule be implemented for development and management of facilities and the ongoing management of the Moose Range and JPUA. A fee schedule should not be implemented until such facilities are developed.

## Navigable Waterbodies

This management plan is based upon the Public Trust Doctrine, which provides for access, movement, and commerce on waterbodies that are navigable. Under this doctrine, and the Equal Footing Doctrine applied in the Statehood Act, the state owns and manages all navigable waterbodies (including the water column and the bed of the waterbody). Shorelands within the Moose Range and JPUA are under state ownership and management.

## Coordination with Other Agencies

DNR will coordinate activities with other federal, state, and borough agencies as appropriate and necessary. Every effort should be made to coordinate with ADF&G on projects that may impact wildlife habitat and moose populations in the Moose Range and JPUA.

## Procedures for Plan Review, Modifications, and Amendment

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

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

“A revision to a land-use plan is subject to the planning process requirements of AS 38.04.065. For the purposes of this section and AS 38.04.065, a ‘revision’ is an amendment or special exception to a land use plan as follows:

- a. An ‘amendment’ permanently changes the land use plan by adding to or modifying the basic management intent for one or more of the plan’s subunits or by changing its allowed or prohibited uses, policies, or guidelines. For example, an amendment might close to new mineral entry an area that the plan designated to be open, allow a land use in an area where the plan prohibited it, or allow land to be opened to homestead entry in an area that the plan designated for retention in public ownership.
- b. A ‘special exception’ does not permanently change the provisions of a land-use plan and cannot be used as the basis for a reclassification of the subunit. Instead, it allows a one-time, limited-purpose variance of the plan’s provisions, without changing the plan’s general management intent or guidelines. For example, a special exception might be used to grant an eligible applicant a preference right under AS 38.05.035 to purchase land in a subunit designated for retention in public ownership. A special exception might be made if complying with the plan

would be excessively burdensome or impractical or if compliance would be inequitable to a third party, and if the purposes and spirit of the plan can be achieved despite the exception.

- c. A minor change to a land-use plan is not considered a revision under AS 38.04.065. A 'minor change' is a change that does not modify or add to the plan's basic intent, and that serves only to clarify the plan, make it consistent, facilitate its implementation, or make technical corrections. Authority: AS 38.04.065, AS 38.04.900, AS 38.05.020, AS 38.05.300."

# Appendices

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## Appendix A: Glossary

**AAC.** Alaska Administrative Code

**Access.** A way or means of approach. Includes transportation, trail, easements, rights of way, and public use sites.

**ADF&G.** Alaska Department of Fish and Game

**ATV.** All-terrain vehicle

**Alpine.** The zone that occurs above the tree line and is characterized by unique vegetation.

**Anadromous waters.** A river, lake, stream, or other waterbody from its mouth to its uppermost reach including all sloughs and backwaters adjoining the listed water, and that portion of the streambed or lakebed covered by ordinary high water used by salmon or other anadromous fish for spawning, rearing or migration. Some, but not all, anadromous waters are shown in “The Atlas to the Catalog of Waters Important for Spawning, Rearing, or Migration of Anadromous Fishes” (referred to as the Anadromous Waters Catalog (AWC)) compiled by ADF&G and DNR.

**ANCSA.** Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (1971)

**ANILCA.** Alaska National Interest Land Conservation Act (1980)

**Area Plan.** A plan approved by the Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources under the authority of AS 38.04.065 that establishes the land and resource management policies for state land within a planning area. Such plans also assign land use designations to individual parcels of state land, which are subsequently converted to land use classifications in a Land Classification Order.

**AS.** Alaska Statute

**ASCMCRA.** Alaska Surface Coal Mining Control and Reclamation Act

**Authorization.** A use allowed by DNR by permit or lease.

**Authorized Use.** A use allowed by DNR by permit or lease.

**Borough.** Refers to Matanuska-Susitna Borough (Also MSB).

**Buffer.** An area of land between two activities or resources managed and used to reduce the effect of one activity upon another.

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

**Classification Order.** *See Land Classification Order.*

**Closed to mineral entry.** Areas where the staking of new mineral claims is prohibited because mining has been determined to be in conflict with significant surface uses in the area. Existing mineral claims that are valid at the time of plan adoption are not affected by mineral closures.

**Commissioner.** The Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Natural Resources.

**DEC.** Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

**Department.** Alaska Department of Natural Resources or DNR

**Designated use.** An allowed use of major importance in a particular management unit. Activities in the unit will be managed to encourage, develop, or protect this use. Where a unit has two or more designated uses, the management intent statement and guidelines for the unit; the Chapter 2 guidelines; and existing statutes, regulations, and procedures, will direct how resources are managed to avoid or minimize conflicts between designated uses.

**Designation.** *See Land use designation.*

**Developed recreational facility.** Any structure or facility that serves either public or private recreational needs.

**Dispersed recreation.** Recreational pursuits that are not site specific in nature, such as hunting, fishing, recreational boating, or wildlife viewing.

**DMLW.** Division of Mining, Land and Water, a division of DNR

**DNR.** Alaska Department of Natural Resources

**DOA.** Division of Agriculture, a division of DNR

**DOF&FP.** Division of Forestry & Fire Protection, a division of DNR

**DOT&PF.** Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

**DPOR.** Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, a division of DNR

**Easement.** An interest in land owned by another that entitles its holder to a specific limited use. (As applied in this plan, also includes those easements that are issued to SCRO and are retained by the state.)

**17(b) Easement.** Easement across Native corporation land reserved through the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA). Uses of the easements are limited to transportation purposes and other uses

specified in the act and in conveyance documents. Information on 17(b) easements may be found at the DNR website: <https://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/paad/17b-easements/>

**Explosive.** A chemical compound, mixture, or device that is commonly used or intended for the purpose of producing a chemical reaction resulting in a substantially instantaneous release of gas and heat; "explosive" includes, but is not limited to dynamite, Tannerite, blasting powder, nitroglycerin, blasting caps, and nitrojelly.

**Feasible.** Capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, technical, and safety factors.

**Firearm.** Includes a pistol, rifle, shotgun, revolver, mechanical, gas, or air-operated gun.

**Fish and wildlife.** Any species of aquatic fish, invertebrates, and amphibians, in any stage of their life cycle, and all species of birds and mammals, found in or which may be introduced into Alaska, except domestic birds and mammals. The term "area(s)" in association with the term "fish and wildlife" refers to both harvest and habitat areas.

**FLUP.** Forest Land Use Plan. FLUPs are prepared by the Division of Forestry & Fire Protection and precede state timber sales.

**Forest Resources and Practices Act (FRPA).** That section of Alaska Statute (AS 41.17.010-.955) that deals with the use, management, and protection of forest resources within the State of Alaska. More formally described as the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act.

**Forestry.** Land that is or has been forested and is suited for long-term forest management because of its physical, climatic, and vegetative conditions. Also refers to the plan designation of Forestry or the land classification of Forest Land.

**Generally allowed use (GAU).** An activity conducted on state land managed by the Division of Mining, Land and Water that is not in a special category or status. For the most part these uses are allowed for 14 days or less, and a permit is not required. 11 AAC 96.020

**Goal.** A statement of basic intent or general condition desired in the long term. Goals usually are not quantifiable and do not have specified dates for achievement.

**Guideline.** A course of action to be followed by DNR resource managers or required of land users when the manager permits, leases, or otherwise authorizes the use of state land or resources. Guidelines also range in their level of specificity from giving general guidance for decision making or identifying factors that need to be considered, to setting detailed standards for on-the-ground decisions. Some guidelines state the intent that must be followed and allow flexibility in achieving it.

**Habitat.** Areas that serve as a concentrated use area for fish and wildlife species during a sensitive life history stage where alteration of the habitat and/or human disturbance could result in a permanent loss of a population or sustained yield of the species. This designation, when used, applies to localized areas

having particularly valuable or sensitive habitat within the planning boundary. The “Ha” designation does not preclude human uses that are compatible with the following categories. Also refers to the plan designation of Habitat or the land classification of Wildlife Habitat Land<sup>16</sup>. Fish and wildlife categories used to identify “Ha” (Habitat) designations in this plan include the following:

- Anadromous and high value resident fish spawning, rearing, overwintering, and migration areas.
- Fish streams frequented by bears (including concentrations by season).
- Nesting, breeding, and molting concentrations for birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (1918).
- Waterfowl and game bird nesting, breeding, and molting areas.
- Bear denning sites.
- Caribou rutting, wintering, and calving areas.
- Dall sheep wintering, rutting, and lambing areas.
- Mountain goat rutting, wintering, and kidding areas.
- Moose rutting, wintering, and calving areas.
- Wolf concentration areas.
- Mineral licks.
- Wildlife migration corridors.
- Core habitat of Species of Greatest Conservation Need.

**High value resident fish.** Resident fish populations that are used for recreational, personal use, commercial, or subsistence purposes (from AS 41.17.950(10)).

**ILMA or ILMT.** See Interagency Land Management Agreement/Transfer.

**Improvements.** Buildings, wharves, piers, dry docks, and other similar types of structures permanently fixed to the uplands, tidelands, or submerged lands that were constructed and/or maintained by the applicant for business, commercial, recreation, residential, or other beneficial uses or purposes. In no event shall fill be considered a permanent improvement when placed on the tidelands solely for the purposes of disposing of waste or spoils. However, fill material actually utilized for beneficial purposes by the applicant shall be considered a permanent improvement. 11 AAC 62.840

**Instream flow.** An instantaneous flow rate of water through a stream during specified periods of time, from a designated location upstream to a designated location downstream.

**Instream flow reservation.** The legal water reservation for instream uses such as fish, wildlife, recreation, navigation, and water quality.

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<sup>16</sup> The term ‘Habitat’ has a meaning that is specific to this plan. A more general definition of habitat is “The location or environment where an organism (or a thing) is most likely to be found.” This more specific meaning is applied to be consistent with the intent of 11 AAC 55.230, which provides a definition of ‘Wildlife Habitat Land’.

**Interagency Land Management Agreement/Transfer (ILMA/ILMT).** An agreement between DNR and other state agencies that transfers some land management responsibility to these other agencies.

**JPUA.** Jonesville Public Use Area.

**Land Classification Order.** An order approved by the Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources that classifies state land into specific land use categories (AS 38.04.065). The Land Classification Order in this Area Plan classifies all state lands within the planning area according to the land use designations assigned to specific management units.

**Land disposal.** Same as Land offering, defined below; except that land disposal areas referenced in Chapter 3 may include lots reserved for lease or sale for public, commercial, or industrial facilities. Differs from an agricultural land disposal.

**Land use designation.** A category of land allocation determined by a land use plan. Designations identify the primary use(s) of state land. Other land uses may occur if they don't significantly detract from or impair the designated use(s). For example, public recreation can occur on land designated for forest management or water resources. Chapter 4 sets out how the land use designations of this plan will be classified according to 11 AAC 55.

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

**Lease.** A Department of Natural Resources authorization for the use of state land according to terms set forth in AS 38.05.070-105.

**Legislatively Designated Area (LDA).** An area set aside by the state legislature for special management actions and retained in public ownership.

**Locatable minerals.** Locatable minerals include both metallic (gold, silver, lead, etc.) and non-metallic (feldspar, asbestos, mica, etc.) minerals.

**Management intent statement.** The statements that define the department's near and long-term management objectives and the methods to achieve those objectives. As most often used in the plan, it refers to the management objectives and methods to achieve those objectives for a particular management unit.

**Management Subunit.** *See subunit.*

**Materials.** "Materials" include but are not limited to common varieties of sand, gravel, rock, peat, pumice, pumicite, cinders, clay and sod. Materials may also refer to the designation of Materials or the land classification of Materials Land.

**May.** States intent for a course of action or a set of conditions to be achieved. Guidelines modified by the word "may" state the plan's intent and allow the manager to analyze budget conditions and staff resources to use discretion in deciding the specific means for best achieving the intent or whether

particular circumstances justify deviations from the intended action or set of conditions. A guideline may include criteria for deciding if such a deviation is justified.

**MCO.** See Mineral Closing Order.

**Mineral Closing Order (MCO).** Mineral closing orders close state lands (mineral estate) to mineral entry. All state lands are open for the prospecting and production of locatable minerals unless the lands are specifically closed to mineral entry. The Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources may close land to mineral entry if a finding has been made that mining would be incompatible with significant surface use on state land (AS 38.05.205). A significant surface use of the land has been interpreted by DNR to include not only residential and commercial structures, but also fish and wildlife habitat, recreational, and scenic values.

**Mineral entry.** Acquiring exploration and mining rights under AS 38.05.185-275.

**Mineral Order.** An order approved by the Commissioner that either closes or opens land to mineral entry. The use of this term is fairly recent. Previously the Department issued mineral opening orders or mineral closing orders. Reference in this plan is to ‘mineral closing order’ since this is the instrument that was used by the Department to close areas within the planning area and since state status plats make reference to ‘Mineral Closing Orders’.

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

**Mining claim.** Rights to deposits of minerals, subject to AS 38.05.185-38.05.275, in or on state land that is open to claim staking may be acquired by discovery, location and recording as prescribed in AS 38.05.185-275. The locator has the exclusive right of possession and extraction of the minerals lying within the boundaries of the claim, subject to AS 38.05.185 -38.05.275.

**MSB.** Matanuska-Susitna Borough.

**Multiple use (AS 38.04.910).** Means the management of state land and its various resource values so that it is used in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the people of Alaska, making the most judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources or related services over areas large enough to provide sufficient latitude for periodic adjustments in use to conform to changing needs and conditions; it includes:

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

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

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

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

**Objectives.** Objectives describe the comprehensive approach to achieve the identified goals for each major resource or use in the Moose Range and JPUA.

**OHV.** Off-Highway Vehicle

**Ordinary high water mark (OHW).** The mark along the bank or shore up to which the presence and action of the nontidal water are so common and usual, and so long continued in all ordinary years, as to leave a natural line impressed on the bank or shore and indicated by erosion, shelving, changes in soil characteristics, destruction of terrestrial vegetation, or other distinctive physical characteristics (from 11 AAC 53.900(23)).

**Permanent use.** A use that includes a structure or facility that is not readily removable.

**Permit.** A Department of Natural Resources authorization for use of state land according to terms set forth in 11 AAC 96.

**Planning period.** Refers to the length of time that the plan covers, which is 20 years. However, the management plan and the land use classifications that derive from the plan remain valid until the area plan is revised.

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

**Primary use.** See Designated use.

**Prohibited use.** A use not allowed in a management subunit because of conflicts with the management intent, designated uses, or management guideline. Uses not specifically prohibited nor designated uses in a management subunit are allowed if compatible with the primary and secondary uses, the management intent statements for the subunit, and the plan's guidelines. Changing a prohibited use to an allowable use requires a plan amendment.

**Public Trust Doctrine.** A doctrine that requires the state to manage tidelands, shorelands, and submerged lands for the benefit of the people so that they can engage in such things as commerce, navigation, fishing, hunting, swimming, and ecological study.

**Public use.** Any human use of state land, including commercial and non-commercial uses.

**Recreation.** Any activity or structure for recreational purposes, including but not limited to hiking, camping, boating, anchorage, access points to hunting and fishing areas, and sightseeing. “Recreation” does not refer to subsistence hunting and fishing.

**Riparian Areas.** Areas adjacent to streams and rivers and, occasionally, lakes.

**Retained land.** Uplands, shorelands, tidelands, submerged lands, and water that are to remain in state ownership.

**Right-of-way.** The legal right to cross the land of another.

**RS 2477.** Revised Statute 2477 from the Mining Act of 1866, which states that “The public right-of-way for the construction of highways over public lands, not reserved for public use, is hereby granted.” Information on RS 2477s can be accessed at the DNR website: <https://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/paad/rs-2477/>

**SCRO.** Southcentral Regional Land Office of the Division of Mining, Land and Water, Alaska Department of Natural Resources.

**SMAP.** Susitna Matanuska Area Plan

**Settlement.** The sale, leasing, or permitting of state lands to allow private recreational, residential, commercial, industrial, or community use. May also refer the designation of Settlement or the land classification of Settlement Land.

**Shall.** Same as “will.”

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

**Should.** States intent for a course of action or a set of conditions to be achieved. Guidelines modified by the word “should” state the plan’s intent and allow the manager to use discretion in deciding the specific means for best achieving the intent or whether particular circumstances justify deviations from the intended action or set of conditions. A guideline may include criteria for deciding if such a deviation is justified.

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

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

**State-selected land.** Federally owned land that is selected by the State of Alaska, but not yet patented nor TAed (Tentative Approval) by the Bureau of Land Management.

**Subsistence.** From the Alaska National Interest Land Conservation Act (ANILCA) [PL 96-486, Sec. 803]. The customary and traditional uses by rural Alaska residents of wild, renewable resources for direct personal or family consumption as food, shelter, fuel, clothing, tools, or transportation; for the making and selling of handicraft articles out of non-edible byproducts of fish and wildlife resources taken for personal or family consumption; for barter or sharing of personal or family consumption; and for customary trade.

**Sub-unit.** A spatial unit used in management plans to describe geographic areas within the plan boundary. Often sub-units occupy state lands that are contiguous or are generally close to each other and that may have similar resource and use characteristics. In this plan, there are 4 sub-units.

**Suitable.** Land that is physically capable of supporting a particular type of resource development, avoids or minimizes impacts to the natural environment, and is compatible with adjacent land uses and adopted land use plans.

**Sustainable Trail.** A trail that conforms to its terrain and environment, is capable of handling its intended use without serious degradation and requires minimal maintenance. (See Alaska State Parks Trail Management Handbook, 2015)

**Sustained Yield.** The definition of sustained yield as applied to forest resources in this plan corresponds to AS 41.17.950(27) and as it applies to land related issues, to AS 38.04.910(12).

**Temporary use.** A use that is one year or less in duration requiring a state permit. Any structure associated with the use must be readily removable.

**TMP.** Trail Management Plan.

**Trail.** A route on the ground established by either repeated use over a period of time, or constructed, that has been used for access purposes that may or may not have the legal provisions of public access granted by an easement.

**Unit.** A smaller spatial area within a sub-unit that provides more specific land use designations and management intent. All 4 sub-units within this plan are divided into several units.

**Unsuitable.** Land that is physically incapable of supporting a particular type of resource development (usually because that resource doesn't exist in that location).

**Uplands.** Lands above mean high water.

**USACOE.** United States Army Corps of Engineers

**USFWS or U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.** United States Fish and Wildlife Service, a division of the U.S. Department of Interior.

**Water Resources.** Refers to the plan designation of Water Resources or the land classification of Water Resources Land.

**Water-dependent.** From 6 AAC 80.900(17): “water-dependent” means a use or activity which can be carried out only on, in, or adjacent to water areas because the use requires access to the waterbody.

**Water-related.** From 6 AAC 80.900(18): “water-related” means a use or activity which is not directly dependent upon access to a waterbody, but which provides goods or services that are directly associated with water-dependence and which, if not located adjacent to water, would result in a public loss of quality in the goods or services offered.

**Weapons.** Includes a bow and arrow, slingshot, crossbow, explosive, or firearm.

**Wetlands.** Includes both freshwater and saltwater wetlands. “Freshwater wetlands” means those environments characterized by rooted vegetation which is partially submerged either continuously or periodically by surface freshwater with less than 0.5 parts per thousand salt content and not exceeding three meters in depth. “Saltwater wetlands” means those coastal areas along sheltered shorelines characterized by salt tolerant, marshy plants and large algae extending from extreme low tide which is influenced by sea spray or tidally induced water table changes.

**Will.** Requires a course of action or a set of conditions to be achieved. A guideline modified by the word “will” must be followed by land managers and users. Deviation from plan designations, management intent, or management guidelines requires a plan amendment.

# Appendix B: Land Classification Order

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

## Land Classification Order No: SC-23-001

- I. Name: Matanuska Valley Moose Range and Jonesville Public Use Area Management Plan (MVMRJPUA)
- II. The classifications in Chapter 3 are based on written justification contained the following plan:

Management Plan: **Matanuska Valley Moose Range and Jonesville Public Use Area**

Adopted ( X )      Revised ( )      Dated July 2, 2024

<u>Legal Description</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Acquisition Authority</u>	<u>Existing Classification</u>	<u>Classification by this Action</u>
See plan maps, MVMRJPUA, 2024			Susitna Matanuska Area Plan, 2011	See plan maps, MVMRJPUA, 2024

- IV. This order replaces and supersedes all existing land classification orders for the plan area boundary, and modifies the area plan boundaries for the 2011 Susitna Matanuska Area Plan, and replaces and supersedes the existing land classification orders for only those lands within the plan boundary of the 2024 MVMRJPUA previously included in the 2011 Susitna Matanuska Area Plan.
- V. 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. Nothing shall prevent the reclassification of these lands if warranted in the public interest.

Classified:   
John Boyle, Commissioner  
Department of Natural Resources

Date: 2 July 24

## Appendix C: Trail Management Plan Process

### Introduction

OHV use related to recreation, hunting, and fishing has increased significantly in the Moose Range and JPUA 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. Some of these trails have been developed in sensitive fish and wildlife habitat areas. Others have been developed in wetlands, where repeated use results in degradation of the soil and development of multiple routes. DNR seeks to address trails impacts to wetlands and sensitive habitat through a comprehensive Trail Management Plan (TMP).

### Trail Management Plan

The TMP will address existing and newly developed trails in the Moose Range and JPUA. The TMP will provide an inventory of all trails to be managed by DNR and provide an assessment of trail conditions and their impacts to fish and wildlife habitat. The assessment will identify trails that have significant impacts on fish and wildlife habitat, particularly waterfowl nesting areas, trumpeter swan or loon nesting areas, moose calving concentration areas, and fish spawning areas. Trails in wetland areas will be assessed to determine if they are having significant impacts on soil and hydrology. Trails impacting other state resources will also be assessed.

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

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

The TMP will not address motorized and non-motorized uses that are allowed by regulation off trail. Examples of this type of use include game retrieval, recreational use off existing trails, and recreation off trails when snow and frost conditions permit. In general, the impacts associated with this type of use do not persist from year to year, and are minor in nature.

These uses are subject to regulations at 11 AAC 96.020. Trails associated with these uses will not be classified through this process.

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

All new trails authorized by the Department will be reserved through public easements, and be developed as sustainable trails. Sustainable trails can handle the intended use without serious environmental degradation. By following landscape contours, utilizing terrain features, and shedding water, sustainable trails require minimal maintenance over the long term.

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

## Trail Management Plan Policy

### Intent

This Trail Management Plan is intended to be used for all classified trails in the Moose Range and JPUA. The process provides direction and design parameters for trail planning, construction, maintenance, and condition assessment. Trail managers may implement the process following adoption of the Moose Range and JPUA Management Plan with the following benefits in mind:

1. Maintaining and enhancing opportunities for the recreating public.
2. Manage use through proper planning, design, and construction of trails.
3. Ensure long-term savings in maintenance costs.
4. Demonstrate that DNR is committed to managing uses, and the associated impacts, so future generations can enjoy the resources of the of the Moose Range and JPUA.

### Goals

The following goals will guide DNR in management of trail resources in the Moose Range and JPUA:

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 provides the general process that DNR will follow in the classification and assessment of trails in the Moose Range and JPUA.

### 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.

### 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 Moose Range and JPUA. 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 Snow 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.

### Sustainable Trails

A Sustainable Trail is defined as a trail that conforms to its terrain and environment, can handle its intended use without serious degradation and requires minimal maintenance.

Trail "Sustainability" is a concept that is being discussed broadly within the national trails community. Certain design concepts that are time-tested, sound, and 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.

### 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 programs. Various methodologies should be reviewed during planned assessments and options will be considered based on their cost effectiveness and ease of use.

### Trail Terminology

Terminology referenced in this process has been adopted from many sources including the U.S. 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 System used in this process is adopted from sources including the U.S. 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 consider the 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 U.S. 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.

<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>

## Appendix D: Legislation

### Matanuska Valley Moose Range Legislation

#### **Sec. 16.20.340. Purpose of Matanuska Valley Moose Range.**

The purpose of [AS 16.20.340](#) — 16.20.360 is to establish the area described in [AS 16.20.360](#) as the Matanuska Valley Moose Range. The primary purposes of the Matanuska Valley Moose Range are to maintain, improve, and enhance moose populations and habitat and other wildlife resources of the area, and to perpetuate public multiple use of the area, including fishing, grazing, forest management, hunting, trapping, mineral and coal entry and development, and other forms of public use of public land not incompatible with the purpose stated in this section.

#### **Sec. 16.20.350. Management responsibility for moose range.**

(a) The Department of Fish and Game is responsible for the management of fish and game resources on the state land and water described in AS 16.20.360 consistent with the purposes of AS 16.20.340 — 16.20.360.

(b) Management of the surface and subsurface estate is the responsibility of the Department of Natural Resources. After adequate public hearings the Department of Natural Resources shall develop and adopt a management plan for the Matanuska Valley Moose Range that shall reflect the concurrence of the Department of Fish and Game. The management plan shall be adopted, implemented, and maintained within three years of the establishment of the Matanuska Valley Moose Range. The management plan shall be revised, if necessary and appropriate, under the same procedure followed for initial adoption. The plan shall provide for roadside recreation sites, including picnicking and camping areas.

(c) The Department of Natural Resources may, after consultation with the Department of Fish and Game, adopt regulations governing the public use of the area. The regulations must include provisions for multiple use, as defined in AS 38.04.910, and for public multiple uses listed in AS 16.20.340. Regulations adopted for the Matanuska Valley Moose Range do not apply to private land within the boundary described in AS 16.20.360.

(d) The area shall be managed to sustain fish and wildlife resources in perpetuity, according to the principle of sustained yield.

(e) The commissioner of natural resources may acquire in the name of the state, by negotiated purchase only, without an option of first purchase, title or interest in real property lying within the boundaries of the Matanuska Valley Moose Range. The land described herein is to be managed by the Department of Natural Resources.

#### **Sec. 16.20.360. Matanuska Valley Moose Range established.**

The state-owned land and water, vacant and unappropriated, and all that acquired in the future by the state, lying within the boundary described in this section, are designated as the Matanuska Valley Moose Range, and are reserved from all uses incompatible with their primary purposes as public use land. The land described herein is to be managed by the Department of Natural Resources.

(1) Township 18 North, Range 1 East, Seward Meridian Section 1;

(2) Township 18 North, Range 2 East, Seward Meridian Sections 4 — 6;  
(3) Township 19 North, Range 1 East, Seward Meridian Section 13  
Sections 24 — 25  
Section 36;  
(4) Township 19 North, Range 2 East, Seward Meridian Section 1  
Section 2, E 1/2  
Section 10, S 1/2  
Sections 11 — 34  
Section 35, N 1/2;  
(5) Township 19 North, Range 3 East, Seward Meridian Sections 1 — 32, that portion lying north of the  
Glenn Highway right-of-way;  
(6) Township 19 North, Range 4 East, Seward Meridian  
Section 1, N 1/2, SW 1/4  
Sections 2 — 10  
Section 11, N 1/2 NE 1/4, SW 1/4 NE 1/4, NW 1/4, NW 1/4 SW 1/4  
Section 15, W 1/2 NW 1/4, NE 1/4 NW 1/4  
Section 16, E 1/2 NE 1/4, N 1/2 S 1/2 that portion north and east of the Glenn Highway right-of-way;  
(7) Township 19 North, Range 5 East, Seward Meridian Section 6, NW 1/4, N 1/2 NE 1/4;  
(8) Township 20 North, Range 2 East, Seward Meridian Section 1  
Sections 12 — 13  
Sections 24 — 25  
Section 36;  
(9) Township 20 North, Range 3 East, Seward Meridian Section 5, W 1/2  
Sections 6 — 7  
Sections 11 — 13  
Sections 18 — 19  
Sections 24 — 25  
Section 30, N 1/2  
Sections 31 — 33, S 1/2  
Sections 34 — 36;  
(10) Township 20 North, Range 4 East, Seward Meridian Section 5, W 1/2  
Section 6  
Section 7, N 1/2  
Sections 12 — 13  
Sections 21 — 36;  
(11) Township 20 North, Range 5 East, Seward Meridian Section 5  
Section 6, E 1/2  
Sections 7 — 8  
Section 12, S 1/2  
Sections 13 — 32  
Section 33, SW 1/4 NE 1/4, N 1/2 NE 1/4, SW 1/4 SW 1/4, N 1/2 SW 1/4, NW 1/4  
Section 34, N 1/2 N 1/2;

(12) Township 20 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian Sections 1 — 12  
Section 14, N 1/2  
Sections 15 — 21  
Section 22, NW 1/4, N 1/2 NE 1/4  
Section 29, W 1/2, those portions lying north of the right-of-way for the Glenn Highway  
Section 30, those portions lying north of the right-of-way for the Glenn Highway;  
(13) Township 20 North, Range 7 East, Seward Meridian Section 6;  
(14) Township 21 North, Range 2 East, Seward Meridian Section 25  
Section 36;  
(15) Township 21 North, Range 3 East, Seward Meridian Section 25  
Section 29, W 1/2  
Sections 30 — 31  
Section 32, W 1/2  
Section 36, N 1/2;  
(16) Township 21 North, Range 4 East, Seward Meridian Section 12, W 1/2  
Section 13  
Section 20  
Section 21, S 1/2  
Section 24, E 1/2  
Section 28  
Section 29, E 1/2  
Section 30, S 1/2  
Sections 31 — 32;  
(17) Township 21 North, Range 5 East, Seward Meridian Section 3  
Section 9  
Section 10, W 1/2  
Sections 16 — 17  
Sections 19 — 20  
Section 21, N 1/2  
Section 29, W 1/2  
Sections 30 — 31  
Section 32, W 1/2;  
(18) Township 21 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian Section 2  
Section 3, E 1/2  
Section 10  
Section 11, W 1/2  
Section 14, W 1/2  
Section 15  
Sections 21 — 22  
Section 23, W ½

Sections 28 — 29

Sections 31 — 36;

(19) Township 21 North, Range 7 East, Seward Meridian Sections 27 — 28

Sections 31 — 32

Section 33, N 1/2

Section 34, N 1/2;

(20) Township 22 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian Section 23

Section 26

Section 35.

## Jonesville Public Use Area Legislation

### **Sec. 41.23.280. Purpose of AS 41.23.280 — 41.23.289.**

The purpose of AS 41.23.280 — 41.23.289 is to protect, maintain, enhance, and perpetuate the present use of the area described in AS 41.23.286 as the Jonesville Public Use Area. The Jonesville Public Use Area is established to

(1) protect, maintain, perpetuate, and enhance year-round general public recreation; (2) protect and maintain fish and wildlife habitat so that the public may continue to enjoy traditional uses of the Jonesville Public Use Area;

(3) provide opportunities for the public to enjoy the area through a full spectrum of public uses, including the maintenance and enhancement of off-road vehicle and nonmotorized recreational opportunities for the public; and

(4) allow

(A) continued mineral exploration and development activities;

(B) motorized access to private property, including property in which a person has a subsurface right, in the Jonesville Public Use Area; and

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

### **Sec. 41.23.282. Management.**

(a) The commissioner is responsible for the management of the surface and subsurface estate of the Jonesville Public Use Area consistent with the purposes of AS 41.23.280. After adequate public hearings, the commissioner may designate incompatible uses and shall adopt and may revise a management plan for the Jonesville Public Use Area to the extent workload permits. The management plan must include provisions for the enforcement of the plan and compliance with the requirements of the plan. The commissioner shall consult with the Department of Fish and Game in the adoption and revision of the management plan.

(b) The commissioner of fish and game, the Board of Fisheries, and the Board of Game are responsible for the management of fish and game resources and the public use of fish and wildlife in the Jonesville Public Use Area consistent with the purposes of AS 41.23.280.

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

(d) The state may not acquire by eminent domain privately owned land within the boundaries described in AS 41.23.286 for inclusion in the Jonesville Public Use Area. However, the state may acquire privately

owned land located within the boundaries described in AS 41.23.286 by purchase, exchange, or otherwise for inclusion in the Jonesville Public Use Area.

**Sec. 41.23.284. Incompatible uses.**

(a) Except as provided in this section, the commissioner may prohibit or restrict uses determined to be incompatible with the purposes of the Jonesville Public Use Area under AS 41.23.280 within the state-owned land and water described in AS 41.23.286.

(b) Nothing in AS 41.23.280 — 41.23.289 prohibits the Department of Fish and Game from engaging in rehabilitation, enhancement, and development of fish and wildlife habitat within an area described in AS 41.23.286 that is consistent with the purposes stated in AS 41.23.280.

(c) The commissioner may not restrict

(1) lawful fishing, hunting, or trapping rights allowed under a regulation of the Board of Fisheries or the Board of Game within the Jonesville Public Use Area;

(2) the use of weapons, including firearms, in the Jonesville Public Use Area, except in locations where the commissioner determines that the use of weapons constitutes a threat to public safety; or

(3) lawful mineral exploration and development activities within the Jonesville Public Use Area.

(d) The commissioner shall

(1) allow the Jonesville Public Use Area to be used for activities that

(A) are compatible with the reasons for establishing the public use area in AS 41.23.280; and

(B) include operating all-terrain vehicles on trails or in areas designated or constructed for their use, aircraft, and watercraft; snowmachining, horseback riding, hiking, bicycling, dog sledding, cross-country skiing, skijoring, camping, hunting, fishing, trapping, wildlife viewing, photography, berry picking; and, where permitted, rifle and pistol ranges, parking of vehicles, and lawful mineral exploration and mining; and

(2) recognize the existing off-road motor vehicle trails and the access those trails provide within the Jonesville Public Use Area, make accommodations that will provide the shortest possible route to avoid critical habitat, conduct trail rehabilitation in a way that minimizes damage, maintain and enhance off-road motor vehicle options and opportunities in the Jonesville Public Use Area, and provide for responsible use of the public use area.

(e) The commissioner of public safety and the commissioner of fish and game shall have necessary access to the Jonesville Public Use Area for fish and game management, research, and enforcement purposes.

(f) If the commissioner determines that a use is incompatible with one or more other uses in a portion of the Jonesville Public Use Area, the commissioner shall state in the management plan adopted or revised under AS 41.23.282

(1) each determination of incompatibility;

(2) the specific area where the incompatibility is determined to exist;

(3) the time within which the incompatibility is determined to exist; and

(4) the reasons for the determination of incompatibility.

**Sec. 41.23.286. Jonesville Public Use Area.**

Subject to valid existing rights, the vacant and unappropriated state-owned land and water and the state land and water acquired in the future that lie within the following boundaries described in this section

are designated as the Jonesville Public Use Area, are reserved for all uses compatible with their primary function as public use land, and are assigned to the department for control and management:

(1) Township 19 North, Range 2 East, Seward Meridian

Section 1: That portion easterly of Moose Creek

Section 12: That portion of N1/2, N1/2SW1/4, and N1/2SE1/4 easterly of Moose Creek

Section 13: NE1/4, SE1/4NW1/4, and S1/2

Section 24: All;

(2) Township 19 North, Range 3 East, Seward Meridian

Section 2: All

Section 3: All Section 4: All

Section 5: All

Section 6: All

Section 7: All

Section 8: All

Section 9: All

Section 10: All

Section 11: All

Section 14: NE1/4

Section 15: N1/2NE1/4 and the North 960 feet of the East 1,815 feet of the NW1/4 for each Record of Survey filed as 86-85RS P.R.D.

Section 16: All

Section 17: All

Section 18: All

Section 19: NE1/4, E1/2NW1/4, NE1/4SW1/4, NW1/4SE1/4, and Government Lots 1, 2, and 4

Section 20: N1/2NE1/4, N1/2NW1/4, and SW1/4NW1/4;

(3) Township 20 North, Range 2 East, Seward Meridian

Section 36: That portion easterly of Moose Creek;

(4) Township 20 North, Range 3 East, Seward Meridian

Section 31: All

Section 32: All

Section 33: All

Section 34: All

Section 35: All.

**Sec. 41.23.288. Enforcement authority.**

(a) In the Jonesville Public Use Area described in AS 41.23.286, the following persons are peace officers of the state for the purpose of enforcing the provisions of AS 41.23.280 — 41.23.289 and regulations adopted under AS 41.23.280 — 41.23.289:

(1) an employee of the department or another person authorized by the commissioner;

(2) a peace officer, as that term is defined in AS 01.10.060.

(b) A person designated in (a) of this section may, when enforcing the provisions of AS 41.23.280 — 41.23.289 or a regulation adopted under AS 41.23.280 — 41.23.289,

- (1) execute a warrant or other process issued by an officer or court of competent jurisdiction;
  - (2) administer or take an oath, affirmation, or affidavit; and
  - (3) issue a citation or arrest a person who violates a provision of AS 41.23.280 — 41.23.289 or a regulation adopted under AS 41.23.280 — 41.23.289.
- (c) A citation issued under (b) of this section must comply with the provisions of AS 12.25.175 — 12.25.230.

**Sec. 41.23.289. Penalty.**

- (a) A person who violates a provision of, or regulation adopted under, AS 41.23.280 — 41.23.289 is guilty of a violation as defined in AS 11.81.900.
- (b) The supreme court shall establish by order or rule a schedule of bail amounts for violations under (a) of this section that allow the disposition of a citation without a court appearance.