

MANAGEMENT UNIT 1: Nelchina River - Tazlina River

Background

This management unit consists of state-owned land along the Little Nelchina, Nelchina, and Tazlina rivers and the north shore of Tazlina Lake. Tazlina River is navigable from Tazlina Lake to the Copper River; therefore, the state owns the entire watercourse including the part that runs through Native lands. The land is now used for hunting and river oriented recreation. A few remote parcel entries are on the south side of the Nelchina River.

The rivers from the Glenn Highway bridge over the Little Nelchina River to the Richardson Highway bridge over the Tazlina River provide an excellent float trip that is expected to receive increased use in the future. The Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR) maintains a small recreation site north of the old bridge over the Little Nelchina River that serves as the starting point for many river trips. It is also possible to float down Mendeltna Creek into Tazlina Lake (see subunit 3B).

Areas north of the Nelchina River are accessible overland from the Glenn Highway. No access problems were identified in this area.

Management Intent

This land will be retained in state ownership for public recreation use and to maintain fish and wildlife habitat. Forestry also is designated as a primary use of land along the Nelchina and Tazlina Rivers. Forestry activity will be conducted so as to protect or enhance recreation values. No land offerings are allowed. The Alaska Legislature should consider designation of the river corridors and northern shore of the lake as a recreation river. Such a designation would ensure long term retention of the land in the corridor in public ownership. The corridor should generally be 200-foot wide on both sides of the river and along the lake. In canyon areas, the corridor width should be defined as the top of the canyon bluff (rather than 200 feet). The DPOR will establish and coordinate a committee that will include its own representatives and those from Division of Forestry, Division of Land and Water Management, Department of Fish and Game, and local residents. The committee will define the boundaries of the recreation river for submission to the Legislature. Legislative designation would also provide DNR with stronger authority to prevent incompatible uses in the corridor, protect archaeological resources, and more likely provide funding to develop access, campgrounds, or public use cabins. A site for a pullout at the Tazlina River bridge on the Richardson Highway should be acquired and included in the recreation river corridor.

In addition to the management intent for the entire unit, the following applies to specific subunits:

Subunit 1B. This is the existing state recreation site at Little Nelchina River that includes a small campground and provides access to the river. The site should be expanded (through an Interagency Land Management Agreement) to include areas along the old road at the entrance to the site.

Subunit 1C. The north shore of Tazlina Lake and the mouth of Kaina Creek are the sites of numerous archaeological and historic resources. Increased recreation activity here could damage these resources or lead to loss of artifacts. As part of the recreation river management, campgrounds or public use cabins should be developed to lure campers away from these archaeological sites. One potential camping area or

site for a public use cabin is where the Tazlina River flows out of Tazlina Lake in the east half of Section 25, T. 3 N., R. 6 W. An archaeological review will be conducted before any timber sales or land leases occur in this subunit. Land leases and permits are not allowed unless they are located so as to cause no impact on archaeological resources. The subunit is closed to new mineral entry to protect the known and potential archaeological resources.

Management Guidelines

River Crossings. River crossings are allowed to provide access to resources on state land and will be consolidated to the maximum extent feasible. Necessary road crossings of the river, to the extent feasible and prudent, will be located and designed to minimize the impact on views, habitat, and recreational values.

Facilities. The siting of facilities within 1/2 mile of the ordinary high water mark of the Nelchina and Tazlina Rivers will be avoided to the extent feasible and prudent, unless the facility is consistent with the purposes for which the recreation river corridor was established or if it cannot be seen from the river.

The complete set of management guidelines is presented in Chapter 2. Any of the guidelines could apply to uses within this management unit; however, guidelines that are most likely to apply are:

- Fish and wildlife habitat
- Recreation, cultural, and scenic resources
- Lakeshore management
- Stream corridors and instream flow

LAND USE DESIGNATION SUMMARY
MANAGEMENT UNIT: 1 - Nelchina River/Tazlina River
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SUBUNIT	LAND OWNERSHIP (GENERALIZED)	LAND USE DESIGNATIONS				PROHIBITED SURFACE USE(S)*	COMMENTS
		SURFACE		SUBSURFACE			
		PRIMARY USE(S)	SECONDARY USE(S)	LOCATABLE MINERALS	LEASEABLE MINERALS		
1A	Mostly state	Forestry Public recreation Wildlife habitat		Open to mineral entry	Available for leasing	Remote cabins Settlement Trapping cabins Grazing in river corridor	Recommended recreation river - river with a 200 foot corridor on each side
1B	State	Public recreation	Wildlife habitat	Closed to mineral entry	Available for leasing	Remote cabins Settlement Trapping cabins Grazing	Little Nelchina State Recreation site (existing)
1C	State, State-Native selections	Heritage resources Public recreation Wildlife habitat	Forestry	Closed to mineral entry	Available for leasing	Land offerings Remote cabins Grazing	Recommended recreation river - river with a 200 foot corridor from lake shore

* Other uses such as material sales, land leases, or permits, that are not specifically prohibited may be allowed. Such uses will be allowed if consistent with the management intent statement, the management guidelines of this unit, and the relevant management guidelines listed in Chapter 2.

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LAND USE DESIGNATION SUMMARY

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		SURFACE		SUBSURFACE			
		PRIMARY USE(S)	SECONDARY USE(S)	LOCATABLE MINERALS	LEASEABLE MINERALS		
1D	State	Public recreation Wildlife habitat Forestry	Heritage resources	Open to mineral entry	Available for leasing	Land offerings Remote cabins	Recommended recreation river - 200 foot corridor on each side or to bluff top

* Other uses such as material sales, land leases, or permits, that are not specifically prohibited may be allowed. Such uses will be allowed if consistent with the management intent statement, the management guidelines of this unit, and the relevant management guidelines listed in Chapter 2.

RESOURCE INFORMATION SUMMARY

Management Unit 1 - Nelchina River - Tazlina River

RESOURCE	SUBUNIT			
	1A	1B	1C	1D
Fish	Arctic Grayling	N/A	salmon-s/r steelhead-s	salmon - s/r steelhead - s
Forestry	high and moderate conif.	moderate conif.	high - moderate conif.	high to moderate conif.
Historic-Cultural	unknown	unknown	many high value cultural sites along shoreline	unknown
Minerals	outside of known mineral terranes	outside of known mineral terranes	outside known mineral terranes	outside known mineral terranes
Oil and Gas	low		low	unknown
Recreation	high value for Nelchina River floating	existing Little Nelchina rec. site, put-in for river trips	high on Tazlina Lake and along Nelchina-Tazlina floating route	high value - Tazlina River; floating, fishing
Sand and Gravel	existing sites along Glenn Hwy.	none		
Settlement Suitability	low & moderate (flood hazard)	unsuitable	low & moderate	moderate (flood hazard)
Transportation	Nelchina River is navigable	On Glenn Highway	Tazlina Lake	Tazlina River is navigable; gorge limits access
Wildlife	A-2 habitat - moose	B-1 habitat	B-1 habitat	B-1 & B-2 habitats

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Important trails:

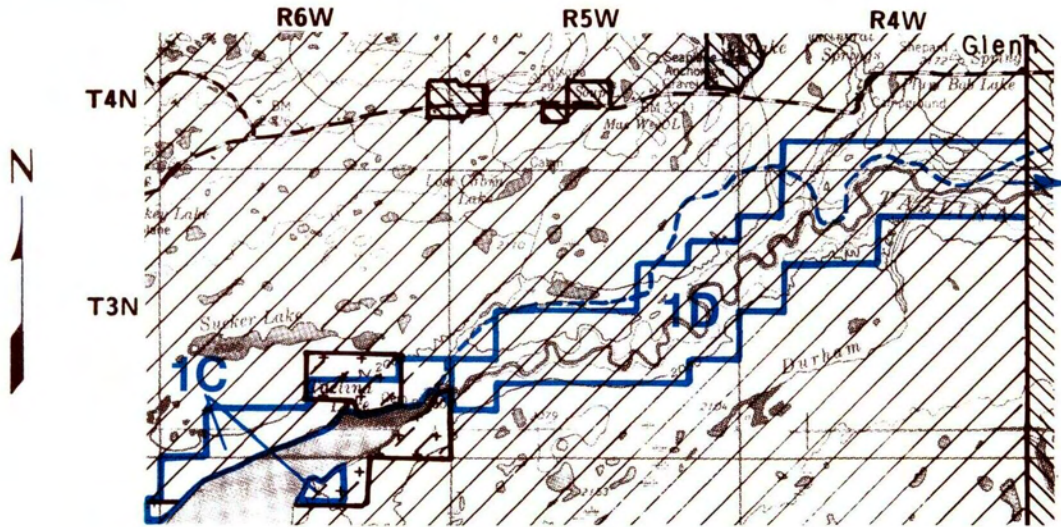
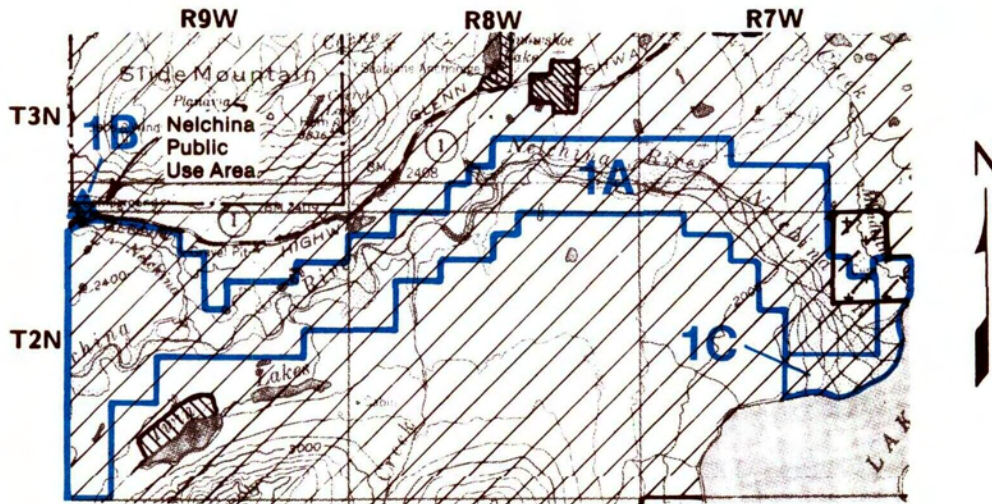
Subunit 1D: Trail along Tazlina River to Tazlina Lake.

Notes: Salt Springs and Mud Volcano are located in subunit 3E north of Glenn Highway

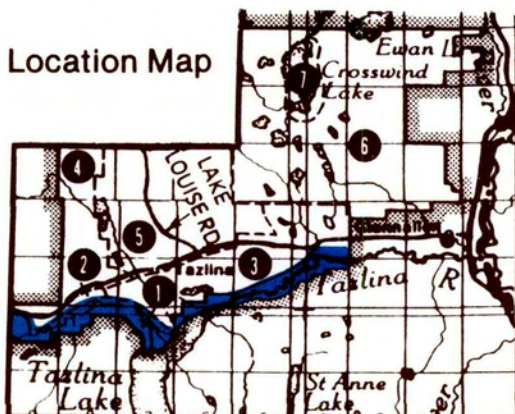
For definitions of ratings, see glossary. For more detailed information on any resources, see resource elements published under separate cover.

MANAGEMENT UNIT 1

Nelchina River/Tazlina River



Unit 1d (Tazlina River) extends to the Copper River



U.S.G.S. Quads:
Gulkana
Valdez

Map scale:
1:250,000

-  State Owned
-  State Selected
-  Native/Private Owned
-  Native Selected
-  Federal
-  Trails on public lands

Map shows approximate location of easements to state land and major trails across state land. Portions of trails may cross private lands. See appendix D.