

6c. Alexander Lake Subunit

Background

MILES OF RIVER/RIVER CHARACTERISTICS, RM 38.3 to RM 44.0

Alexander Lake is about 2.5 miles long and 0.5 miles wide. The terrain around the lake is flat. Contiguous wetlands make up at least 90 percent of the area within the subunit. Well-drained sites are mostly in private ownership.

LAND OWNERSHIP

State	4,276 acres
11 Private Parcels	94 acres
Total	4,370 acres

WILDLIFE

In recent years, three trumpeter swan nests are located along Alexander Lake, two on the west, and one on the east shore. Active bald eagle nests have not been sighted in recent surveys in this subunit.

CAMPING

The following undeveloped campsites have been identified:

Primary campsites	3 on the Lake
Secondary campsites	numerous along the entire creek
Marginal campsites	numerous along the entire creek

DEVELOPMENT

Alexander Lake Lodge is located on the south end of the lake. There are a number of improvements associated with the lodge. There are also equipment storage and boat storage areas adjacent to

the river used by the lodge. A large dump is located behind the lodge. Six cabins are scattered around the lake, mostly on the south end. A primitive platform has been installed by air services on the southeast end of the lake to provide a dry area for floaters to inflate rafts. The platform was installed because there is little dry ground on public lands near the exit of the lake suitable for this purpose.

ACCESS

There is a major off-road vehicle trail from the lodge along the east shore of the lake. Most of this trail is in wetlands. Another trail used by the lodge is in the woods on the north side of the creek. The trail is used to transport clients who take a short float trip down the creek. Seismic lines in this subunit do not appear to be heavily used in summer. Floaters are usually dropped off by floatplanes at one of three primitive campsites around the lake. The most commonly used landing area is near the lake exit where the previously mentioned platform is located. The other floatplanes drop-off area is on the northwest side of the lake. This second site is more commonly used in late summer when the lake becomes clogged with weeds.

In previous years the Iditarod race trail crossed the lake. In 1989 this course was not used. This route is also used for the Iditaski ski race and Iron Dog snowmachine race. Private property owners around the lake use snowmachines on the lake and on the river.

HERITAGE RESOURCES

The heritage site potential is high.

Management Intent

Class II. This subunit is used primarily as a put-in point for float trips down Alexander Creek and for lodge-based recreation. This subunit provides high quality fishing and hunting opportunities. The subunit contains winter moose and salmon spawning habitat. Camping opportunities are limited because well-drained sites around the lake are in private ownership. Private lands are located on the south half of the lake and along the creek. Winter use of the subunit is primarily by snowmachines, skiers, and dogmushers following the Iditarod Trail. The subunit will be managed to

provide and enhance these recreation opportunities, and fish and wildlife habitat while accommodating uses associated with private lands. Developing a suitable dry access point for the public is a high priority. Wetlands compose over 90 percent of the public lands in this subunit. Development of, or activities on, wetlands that would result in significant damage should be avoided or minimized. Maintaining public use sites is a high priority. The subunit will be managed to provide opportunities for both motorized and non-motorized access. There are no non-motorized areas in this subunit.

Management Guidelines

Boating Restrictions. None.

Iditarod National Historic Trail and Iditarod Race Trail. Both trail systems pass through this subunit. See guidelines in Chapter 2, *National Historic Trail and Trails, Iditarod Race Trail*.

Public Information. A kiosk should be established to provide information on the river at the most commonly used public air-taxi drop-off point on Alexander Lake. A sign should be established at the outlet of the lake identifying it as a Recreation River.

Land Acquisition. Most of the land around Alexander Lake is wetlands. Most, if not all, the well-drained upland sites are in private ownership. There is one site now used by air charters for drop-off. This site is on public lands and is

poorly drained. A field survey of the upland sites in public ownership should be conducted to find a site suitable for air taxi drop-offs, boat launching, camping, information signs, and privies. Over the long-term, an upland parcel should be acquired which provides adequate space for these activities. If no such site is found, the primitive platform on the southeast side of the lake (in PU 6c.1) should be upgraded as an interim measure.

Solid Waste. A large solid waste dump is located behind the Alexander Lake Lodge. DNR should work with DEC to ensure that this use complies with state regulations. If it is located on state lands DNR shall also ensure that the dump is managed consistent with plan guidelines. See *Water and Solid Waste* in Chapter 2.

Public Use Sites

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

- PU 6c.1 Unnamed Put-in Site (RM 41.2).** Most of the well-drained upland sites around the lake are in private ownership. A small platform has been constructed on the east side of the lake. The platform allows floaters to inflate their rafts on dry ground before descending the river. This platform should be improved or an alternate upland site selected.