

Recreation and Tourism

Goals

Commercial and Private Recreation Opportunities. Provide the full spectrum of accessible, developed, and undeveloped recreation opportunities for Alaskans and visitors.

Tourism Opportunities. Recognize the importance of the tourism industry to the local and state economy and provide opportunities to appreciate the natural environment, history and culture, and other features important to the visitor industry.

Resource Protection. Protect ecologic, scenic, and other recreation resources for present and future generations.

Economic Development. Manage Alaska's recreation resources to support a commercial recreation industry that supplies jobs, income, and revenue.

Meet the four goals above through:

- 1. State Park System.** Develop a system of parks, recreation areas, trails, historic parks, rivers, and sites that provide a wide range of year-round outdoor recreation opportunities, and areas of unchanged scenic landscape for all ages, abilities and use preferences.
- 2. Recreation on State Lands.** Provide recreation opportunities on land and water areas which serve multiple purposes such as habitat protection, timber management, and mineral resource extraction.
- 3. Community Assistance.** Assisting communities through cooperative planning of state and municipal lands and grants-in-aid for parks and trails within population centers.
- 4. Commercial Recreation Facilities.** Encouraging commercial development of recreation facilities and services through land sales, leases, and technical assistance where recreation needs can most effectively be provided by private enterprise.
- 5. Optimum Use of Sites.** Achieve the optimum use of recreation and tourism sites consistent with maintaining high quality recreation experiences, wildlife harvest, environmental quality, and safety.

Management Guidelines

A. The Roles of Different Public Land Owners in Providing Public Recreational Opportunities.

1. Generally the state's proper role is to retain and manage land supporting recreational opportunities of regional or statewide significance. The state and federal governments are particularly capable of providing recreational opportunities, such as hunting, dispersed wilderness hiking, or boating, that require large land areas. In general, the role of a municipality or borough is to provide and manage community recreational opportunities.
2. In recognition of a municipality's role in meeting community recreational needs, the state should consider, under AS 38.05.810, eventual transfer of certain state recreation sites near communities to municipal ownership. Selection of these sites shall be agreed to by the municipality and the state and shall be contingent on the municipality's commitment to develop and maintain the recreational values of the sites as required by AS 38.05.810.

B. Shelter Cabins. A system of shelter cabins should be established in the Upper Yukon area for public, non-profit use. The development and maintenance of these facilities is to be the responsibility of private, non-profit or other non-state organizations. State land may be made available to support the development of this program.

C. Commercial Recreational Facilities on State Land. Lodges, tent camps, or other private facilities designed as private recreational facilities will be permitted or leased where a management plan or AS 38.05.035 finding shows the following.

1. **Commercial and Private Recreation Opportunities.** Commercial recreation development adds to or enhances available recreation opportunities.
2. **Impacts on Other Uses.** The commercial facility and the use it generates will avoid significant negative impacts on the amount and quality of existing uses, including fish and wildlife harvest. It is recognized that a quantitative determination of the effects of the proposed facility will rarely, if ever, be possible, but an assessment of the impacts should use information as available from DNR, ADF&G, or other available sources.
3. **Siting, Design, Construction, and Operation.** The facility will be sited, designed, constructed, and operated in a manner that creates the least conflict with natural values and traditional uses of the area.
4. **Other Guidelines.** The facility will be sited and designed in accordance with stream corridor, access, wetlands, and other guidelines in this plan. Final approval of a permit or lease for the facility will be given only after consultation with ADF&G and the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation.

D. Commercial Recreation Leasing Processes. Two processes exist for leasing state land for commercial recreational facilities – one process is described by AS 38.05.073, the other by

AS 38.05.070 and .075. Unless Chapter 3 specifically requires the .073 commercial leasing process for a management unit, applications may be adjudicated under either process. DNR will determine the appropriate process on a case-by-case basis. DOT/PF has its own leasing process that applies to land it manages in rights-of-way, airports, materials sites, and other lands and facilities it manages.

1. **The .070 / .075 Process.** The .070 / .075 process is simpler and faster, but it offers the state less flexibility in choosing the lessee and in structuring lease payments. This process is generally suited to small projects with few anticipated impacts. The management intent for the unit need not specifically state that this type of leasing is an allowed use for it to be authorized under this process.
2. **The .073 Process.** The .073 process is longer, but it allows submission of alternative proposals for a particular lease, requires more public involvement in reviewing a proposed lease, and offers the state more choices for structuring payments on the lease. The .073 process is generally suited to large projects that are likely to have significant impacts on surrounding areas. Under the .073 process, DNR will give public notice that it intends to solicit proposals for a lease. DNR will then prepare a “request for proposals” that must include specific information on the lease and must be advertised in state and local newspapers. Once a prospective lessee has been chosen, DNR must give public notice and hold public meetings on the preliminary decision to issue the lease.

DNR may impose eligibility standards, including proof of the developer’s financial backing and capability, experience in this type of development, ability to meet bonding or insurance requirements, and ability to comply with resource and environmental analysis requirements.

The .073 process requires that potential economic, social, and environmental impacts of the proposed project must be evaluated. DNR may require the prospective developer to fund additional studies; the studies must involve the appropriate state agencies, and ADF&G must approve any studies involving fish and game.

For a .073 lease to be considered in a unit, the plan must specifically allow for this type of leasing in a given unit before it can be authorized. Since no units are identified in this area plan specifically for commercial recreation leasing under the .073 process, a plan amendment is required.

- E. **Optimum Use of Sites.** Achieve optimum use of recreation sites consistent with maintaining high quality recreation experiences, wildlife harvest, environmental quality, and safety.
- F. **Other Guidelines Affecting Recreation and Tourism.** Other guidelines may affect recreation and tourism. Sections in this chapter that should also be referred to include but are not limited to:

Fish and Wildlife Habitat and Harvest
Forestry
Heritage Resources

Trails and Public Access
Transportation