



## Fact Sheet: Generally Allowed Uses

---

As provided in 11 AAC 96.020, the following uses and activities are generally allowed on state land managed by the Division of Mining, Land and Water (these uses and activities may be restricted in legislatively designated areas, or special management category or status as listed in 11 AAC 96.014<sup>1</sup>). Uses listed as “Generally allowed” do not require a permit from the Division of Mining, Land and Water. Note that this list does not apply to state parks, nor to land owned or managed by other state agencies such as the University of Alaska, Alaska Mental Health Trust, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, or the Alaska Railroad. You may need other state, federal or borough permits for these uses or activities. Permits may be required from the Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Environmental Conservation, the Environmental Protection Agency, Alaska Department of Fish and Game Habitat Division (ADF&G-Habitat). See “Special Conditions and Exceptions” section on page 3 for a list of exceptions before beginning an activity on state land.

### Travel Across State Land

- **Hiking, backpacking, skiing, climbing, and other foot travel; bicycling; traveling by horse or dogsled or with pack animals.**
- **Using a highway vehicle** with a curb weight of up to 10,000 pounds, including a four-wheel-drive vehicle and a pickup truck, **or using a recreational-type vehicle off-road** or all-terrain vehicle with a curb weight of up to 1,500 pounds, including a snowmobile (or other tracked vehicle), motorcycle or ATV, on or off an established road easement, if use off the road easement does not cause or contribute to water quality degradation, alteration of drainage systems, significant rutting, ground disturbance, or thermal erosion. (Curb weight means the weight of a vehicle with a full tank of fuel and all fluids topped off, but with no one sitting inside or on the vehicle and no cargo loaded. Most highway rated sport utility vehicles are within the weight limit as are most small ATVs, including a basic Argo.) Use of larger off-road vehicles over 1,500 pounds curb weight, and the off-road travel of construction and mining equipment requires a permit from DNR. An authorization is required from the ADF&G-Habitat for any motorized travel in fish bearing streams.
- **Landing an aircraft** (such as a single-engine airplane or a helicopter), or using watercraft (such as a boat, jet-ski, raft, or canoe), without damaging the land, including shoreland, tideland, and submerged land.
- **Driving livestock**, including any number of reindeer or up to 100 horses, cattle, or other domesticated animals.

### Access Improvements on State Land

- **Brushing or cutting a trail** less than five feet wide using only hand-held tools such as a chainsaw (making a trail does not create a property right or interest in the trail).
- **Anchoring a mooring buoy** in a lake, river, or marine waters, or **placing a float, dock, boat haulout, floating breakwater, or boathouse** in a lake, river, or in marine waters, for the personal, noncommercial use of the upland owner, if the use does not interfere with public access or another public use, and if the improvement is placed within the projected sidelines of the contiguous upland owner’s parcel or otherwise has the consent of the affected upland owner. A float or dock means an open structure without walls or roof that is designed and used for access to and from the water rather than for storage, residential use, or other purposes. A boat haulout means either a rail system (at ground level or elevated with pilings) or a line attached from the uplands to an anchor or mooring buoy. A floating breakwater means a structure, such as a log bundle, designed to dissipate wave or swell action. A boathouse means a structure designed and used to protect a boat from the weather rather than for other storage, residential use or other purposes.

---

<sup>1</sup> These special use areas are listed in 11 AAC 96.014 and on the last page of this fact sheet. Maps of the areas are available online at: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/sua/>

## Removing or Using State Resources

- **Hunting, fishing, or trapping**, or placement of a crab pot, shrimp pot, herring pound or fishwheel, that complies with applicable state and federal statutes and regulations on the taking of fish and game.
- **Harvesting** a small number of **wild plants, mushrooms, berries, and other plant material** for personal, noncommercial use. The cutting of trees is not a generally allowed use except as it relates to brushing or cutting a trail as provided above. Commercial harvest of non-timber forest products requires a permit (11 AAC 96.035) and harvest practices must conform to the Alaska Non-Timber Forest Products Harvest Manual for Commercial Harvest on state-owned Lands. ([dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/ntfp/](http://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/ntfp/))
- **Using dead and down wood for a cooking or warming fire**, unless the department has closed the area to fires during the fire season.
- **Grazing** no more than five domesticated animals.
- **Recreational gold panning; hard-rock mineral prospecting or mining** using light portable field equipment, such as a hand-operated pick, shovel, pan, earth auger, or a backpack power drill or auger; or suction dredging using a suction dredge with a nozzle intake of six inches or less, powered by an engine of 18 horsepower or less, and pumping no more than 30,000 gallons of water per day. An authorization is required from ADF&G-Habitat prior to dredging in fish bearing streams.

## Other Improvements and Structures on State Land

- **Setting up and using a camp** for personal, noncommercial recreational purposes, or for any non-recreational purpose (such as a support camp during mineral exploration), for no more than 14 days at one site, using a tent platform or other temporary structure that can readily be dismantled and removed, or a floathouse that can readily be moved. Moving the entire camp at least two miles starts a new 14-day period. Cabins or other permanent improvements are not allowed, even if they are on skids or another non-permanent foundation. The camp must be removed immediately if the department determines that it interferes with public access or other public uses or interests.
- **Brushing or cutting a survey line** less than five feet wide using only hand-held tools (such as a chainsaw), or setting a survey marker (setting a survey monument—a permanent, official marker—requires written survey instructions issued by the Division of Mining, Land and Water under 11 AAC 53).
- Placing a residential **sewer outfall** into marine waters from a contiguous privately owned upland parcel, with the consent of the affected parcel owners, if the outfall is within the projected sidelines of the contiguous upland parcel and is buried to the extent possible or, where it crosses bedrock, is secured and covered with rocks to prevent damage. Any placement of a sewer outfall line must comply with state and federal statutes and regulations applicable to residential sewer outfalls.
- **Placing riprap or other suitable bank stabilization material** to prevent erosion of a contiguous privately owned upland parcel if no more than one cubic yard of material per running foot is placed onto state shoreland and the project is otherwise within the scope of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers nationwide permit on bank stabilization.

## Miscellaneous Uses of State Land

- **An event or assembly of 50 people or less**, including events sponsored by non-profit organizations or a commercial event. Entry for **commercial recreation** purposes **on a day-use basis** with no overnight camps or unoccupied facilities that remain overnight, as long as the use has been registered as required by 11 AAC 96.018.
- **Recreational or other use** not listed above may occur on state land as long as that use
  - is not a commercial recreational camp or facility, (whether occupied or unoccupied) that remains overnight;
  - does not involve explosives or explosive devices (except firearms);
  - is not prospecting or mining using hydraulic equipment methods (i.e. the use of pumped or flowing water to remove overburden or move gravels);
  - does not include drilling in excess of 300 feet deep (including exploratory drilling or stratigraphic test wells on state land not under oil or gas lease);
  - is not for geophysical exploration for minerals subject to lease or an oil and gas exploration license or for seismic surveys involving the use of explosives;

- does not cause or contribute to significant disturbance of vegetation, drainage, or soil stability;
- does not interfere with public access or other public uses or interests; and
- does not continue for more than 14 consecutive days at any site. Moving the use to another site at least two miles away starts a new 14-day period.
- \*does not include exploration for coal (a notice of intent to conduct exploration for coal must be filed with the DNR)

**Check for Special Conditions and Exceptions!**

All activities on state land must be conducted in a responsible manner that will minimize or prevent disturbance to land and water resources, and must comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. **By acting under the authority of this list, the user agrees to the conditions set out in 11 AAC 96.025** (a copy of these conditions are attached to this fact sheet). A person who violates these conditions is subject to any action available to the department for enforcement and remedies, including civil action for forcible entry and detainer, ejectment, trespass, damages, and associated costs, or arrest and prosecution for criminal trespass in the second degree. The department may seek damages available under a civil action, including restoration damages, compensatory damages, and treble damages under AS 09.45.730 or AS 09.45.735 for violations involving injuring or removing trees or shrubs, gathering technical data, or taking mineral resources. (11 AAC 96.145)

Remember that this list does not apply to state parks, University of Alaska lands, or Alaska Mental Health Trust lands. In addition, some areas managed by the Division of Mining, Land and Water are not subject to the full list of generally allowed uses. Exceptions may occur because of special conditions in a state land use plan or management plan (for example, a management plan may reduce the number of days that people can camp at a specific site), or by a “special use land” designation (for instance, a special use land designation for the North Slope requires a permit for off-road vehicle use). Special Use Areas are listed in 11 AAC 96.014; more information is available on the department’s website at [dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/sua/](http://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/sua/). GAU’s have also been modified for the Knik River Public Use Area.

Be aware that this list does not exempt users from the permit requirements of other state, federal, or local agencies. For example, the ADF&G - Habitat may require a permit for a stream crossing or if the use will take place in a state game refuge.

Finally, this list does not authorize a use if another person has already acquired an exclusive property right for that use. For instance, it does not give people permission to graze livestock on someone else’s state grazing lease, to build a trail on a private right-of-way that the Division of Mining, Land and Water has granted to another person, or to pan for gold on somebody else’s state mining location.

Department staff can help users determine the land status of state-owned land and whether it is subject to any special exceptions or to private property rights.

**For additional information, contact the Department of Natural Resources:**

Anchorage/Southcentral  
Public Information Center  
550 West 7th Avenue, Suite 1360  
Anchorage, AK 99501-3561  
Phone: (907) 269-8400  
Fax: (907) 269-8901  
[dnr.pic@alaska.gov](mailto:dnr.pic@alaska.gov)

Juneau/Southeast  
Regional Land Office  
PO Box 111020  
400 Willoughby Avenue, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Juneau, AK 99801  
Phone: (907) 465-3400  
Fax: (907) 465-3886  
[sero@alaska.gov](mailto:sero@alaska.gov)

Fairbanks/Northern  
Public Information Center  
3700 Airport Way  
Fairbanks, AK 99709-4699  
Phone: (907) 451-2705  
Fax: (907) 457-2706  
[fbx-pic@alaska.gov](mailto:fbx-pic@alaska.gov)

Statewide TTY: 711 for Alaska Relay or 1-800-770-8973

**CONDITIONS FOR GENERALLY ALLOWED USES  
(11 AAC 96.025)**

A generally allowed use listed in 11 AAC 96.020 is subject to the following conditions:

- (1) activities employing wheeled or tracked vehicles must be conducted in a manner that minimizes surface damage;
- (2) vehicles must use existing roads and trails whenever possible;
- (3) activities must be conducted in a manner that minimizes
  - (A) disturbance of vegetation, soil stability, or drainage systems;
  - (B) changing the character of, polluting, or introducing silt and sediment into streams, lakes, ponds, water holes, seeps, and marshes; and
  - (C) disturbance of fish and wildlife resources;
- (4) cuts, fills, and other activities causing a disturbance listed in (3)(A)–(C) must be repaired immediately, and corrective action must be undertaken as may be required by the department;
- (5) trails and campsites must be kept clean; garbage and foreign debris must be removed; combustibles may be burned on site unless the department has closed the area to fires during the fire season;
- (6) survey monuments, witness corners, reference monuments, mining location posts, homestead entry corner posts, and bearing trees must be protected against destruction, obliteration, and damage; any damaged or obliterated markers must be reestablished as required by the department under AS 34.65.020 and AS 34.65.040;
- (7) every reasonable effort must be made to prevent, control, and suppress any fire in the operating area; uncontrolled fires must be immediately reported;
- (8) holes, pits, and excavations must be repaired as soon as possible; holes, pits, and excavations necessary to verify discovery on prospecting sites, mining claims, or mining leasehold locations may be left open but must be maintained in a manner that protects public safety;
- (9) on lands subject to a mineral or land estate property interest, entry by a person other than the holder of a property interest, or the holder's authorized representative, must be made in a manner that prevents unnecessary or unreasonable interference with the rights of the holder of the property interest.

**List of Special Use Land Designations Excluded from Generally Allowed Uses**

- Alyeska Ski Resort
- Baranof Lake Trail
- Caribou Hills
- Exit Glacier Road
- Glacier/Winner Creek
- Hatcher Pass Special Use Area
- Haines State Forest
- Indian Cove
- Kamishak Special Use Area
- Kenai Fjords Coastline
- Kenai River Special Management Area Proposed Additions
- Lake Clark Coastline
- Lower Goodnews River
- Lower Talarik Creek
- Marmot Island Special Use Area
- Nenana River Gorge and McKinley Village Subd.
- North Slope Area
- Northern Southeast Area, Tidelands
- Nushagak
- Poker Flat North
- Poker Flat South
- Resurrection Bay
- Tangle Lakes Archaeological District
- Thompson Pass
- Togiak National Wildlife Refuge Shorelands
- Knik River Special Use Area