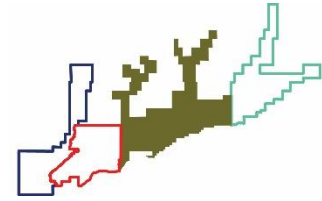


685 The Middle Management Subunit



686 Background

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

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

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

702 Planning and Land Management Issues

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

709 Land Use Designations

710 State land will be managed consistent with its designation(s); as specifically articulated through
711 management intent described below and applicable goals and management guidelines found in Chapters
712 2 and 3. Some lands have one designation while other lands are co-designated for a variety of uses. Table
713 3 provides a quick reference of the designations and co-designations used in this management subunit,
714 and the acreages of designation(s).

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719 *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>35,254</i>
<i>M2: Habitat, Public Recreation Dispersed, Forestry</i>	<i>Ha, Rd, F</i>	<i>6,690</i>

720 **Management Intent**

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

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

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

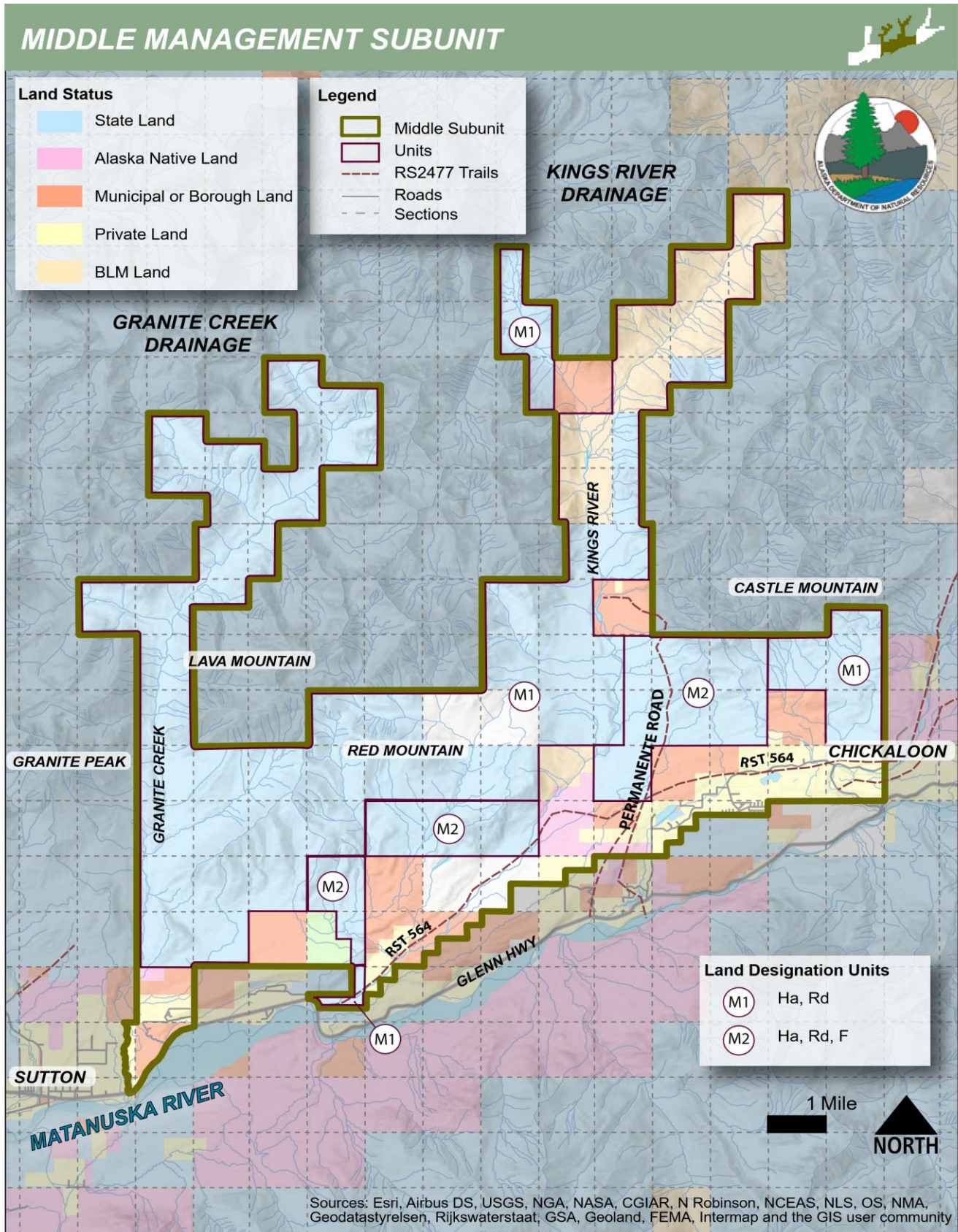
738 There are areas in this unit where grazing may be authorized under the guidelines of this plan, however
 739 grazing will not be authorized along a portion of the east fork of Granite Creek, north of Little Granite
 740 Creek, due to unstable slopes and possible conflicts with Dall sheep concentrations.

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

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

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749 **Unit-Specific Management Guidelines**

750 1. **Access and Trails**

751 a. **Public Use of Existing Access.**

752 i. **Maintenance of Existing Access.** The state should ensure access to public rights-of-way
753 and easements for public access along the Permanente Road, the Fish Lake Subdivision
754 Road, the Castle Mountain Mine Road, the Chickaloon River Road, the Chickaloon-Knik-
755 Nelchina Trail, the Chickaloon River Trail and the Young Creek Trail, and to public lands
756 along the Fish Lake Subdivision.

757 ii. **Access Priorities.** DNR should verify legal access for the Chickaloon River Trail and the
758 Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail according to Chapter 2 guidelines. If acquisition of access
759 is required, DNR may pursue this process as time and staffing allows. Relocation of the
760 Chickaloon River Trail north of private land through state lands will be allowed following
761 the criteria outlined in 11 AAC 51.100 to provide an alternative trail if necessary.

762 iii. **Access to Little Granite Creek Bench.** Access to trails is often blocked by private lands.
763 Public access to the Little Granite Creek bench is important for providing outdoor
764 recreational opportunities such as hunting, and for future moose management of the
765 Moose Range. There is an existing private access road to the bench that is blocked to
766 public use. Private land on the bench also blocks public access to public land beyond.
767 Public access to the Little Granite Creek Bench should be pursued.

768 iv. **Areas with Active Assertion.** DNR should continue researching the validity of a public
769 right-of-way on roads and trails and follow Chapter 2 guidelines for making a right-of-way
770 assertion wherever necessary and possible.

771 b. **New Access.** Construction of new trails and roads into the upper Granite Creek drainage (the area
772 north of Sec. 36, T2CN, R3E) shall be prohibited for recreation, timber management, or wildlife
773 enhancement activities¹². Foot and helicopter access will be used to access the upper drainage
774 for habitat enhancement if necessary to maintain a wildlife species.

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

777 i. Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina, Chickaloon River and Young Creek Trails. These trails should be
778 maintained at their existing functional level and not be substantially upgraded or
779 improved (except sustainable trail work to reestablish foot use on the Chickaloon-Knik-
780 Nelchina and Chickaloon River Trails is allowed if necessary). Access will remain open to
781 the public for existing uses, including hunting and trapping activities. Timber harvest or
782 habitat enhancement activities along these trails will follow the Chapter 2 guidelines on
783 buffers. Signs may be placed along the trails as necessary to inform the public of legal
784 access, mark the proper trail route, and help keep the public from trespassing on private
785 lands.

786 ii. **Trail Kiosks, Signage, and Wayfinding.** Trailhead maps, kiosks, wayfinding signage, and
787 trail use information may be developed. Signs will clearly display trail use information,

¹² This management guideline requires the promulgation of regulations for implementation.

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

790 2. Cultural and Heritage Resources

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

808 3. Fish & Wildlife

- 809 a. Resource Management. This subunit will be managed primarily to maintain, protect and, if
810 necessary, enhance the following fish and wildlife resources and habitats:
- 811 i. Moose throughout the subunit.
- 812 ii. Ruffed grouse throughout the subunit.
- 813 iii. Brown Bear in upper Granite Creek and Young Creek.
- 814 iv. Black bear habitat throughout the subunit.
- 815 v. Dall sheep winter and summer ranges.
- 816 vi. Caribou in the northernmost, montane portions of the subunit.
- 817 vii. Mineral Licks.
- 818 viii. Riparian habitats and instream flow along the following drainages: Granite Creek, Young
819 Creek, Kings River and lower Chickaloon River.
- 820 ix. Chinook, coho, and chum salmon and Dolly Varden in Granite Creek and Kings River.
- 821 x. Pink salmon in Granite Creek.
- 822 xi. Chinook and coho salmon in the Chickaloon River.
- 823 xii. Rainbow trout in Chain Lakes, Kings River, Fish Lake, and Ruby Lake.
- 824 xiii. Bald eagle nests along lower Granite Creek.

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

844 4. Forestry

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

854 5. Grazing

855 Grazing Prohibited. In addition to the guidelines in Chapter 2 and due to potential conflict with Dall sheep
856 and unstable soils, livestock grazing shall be prohibited in an area north of Little Granite Creek and east of
857 Granite Creek¹³.

¹³ This management guideline requires the promulgation of regulations for implementation.

858 6. Public Use Sites

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

860 7. Recreation

861 a. State Recreation and Camping Roadside Facilities.

862 i. Kings River Campground. DMLW should consider authorizing development, maintenance,
863 and management of a campground facility at Kings River. The site could be at least 200
864 acres in size and include the bluff and usable land within the proposed site and the land
865 that lies east of the Glenn Highway right-of-way in the NE1/4, E1/2NW1/4 and N1/2S1/2
866 Sec. 16, T19N, R4E S.M. Before issuing an authorization, a proposed campground site plan
867 should be developed that analyzes the floodplain and provides for public access to the
868 adjoining Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina and Young Creek trail systems.

869 ii. King Mountain State Recreation Site. Although outside the boundary of the Moose Range,
870 the King Mountain State Recreation Site provides an opportunity for camping in the
871 vicinity of the Moose Range.

872 b. Interpretive Displays. Site development plans for a campground at Kings River and King Mountain
873 Recreation Site may provide for interpretation related to the Moose Range. Interpretive displays
874 may also be installed at other trailheads within the subunit.

875 c. Fossil Viewing. Fossil viewing is a dispersed outdoor recreational activity that is popular in the
876 Middle Management Subunit. The activity may be restricted by DNR if the public's safety is
877 endangered, if the activity interferes with coal mining operations, or if the cultural/heritage value
878 of the resource warrants restrictions. All fossils are the property of the State and it is unlawful to
879 collect or remove them without the proper authorizations (AS 41.35).

880 8. Subsurface Resources

881 Mineral Closures. The southern face of Castle Mountain shall be closed to locatable mineral entry to
882 protect the unique scenic quality of the mountain. The southern face of Castle Mountain will not be made
883 available for the exploration or development of leasable minerals.

884 9. Water, Wetlands, and Waterbodies

885 a. Lakeshores and Stream Corridors. Habitat enhancement efforts in riparian zones along Granite
886 and Young Creek and Kings River and in the vicinity of all lakes in the subunit will take place
887 according to the Chapter 2 guidelines on buffers.

888 b. Wetland Buffers. A buffer will be retained around the 160-acre wetland on Little Granite Creek
889 Bench as described in the Chapter 2 guidelines on buffers.

890 c. Instream Flow Reservations. ADF&G may establish instream flow needs on Granite Creek, Young
891 Creek, Kings River, and Chickaloon River to maintain fish and wildlife resources, riparian habitat
892 and associated recreational opportunities as funding and staff are available. The DLWM will work
893 closely with ADF&G to establish the instream flow reservations.

894