

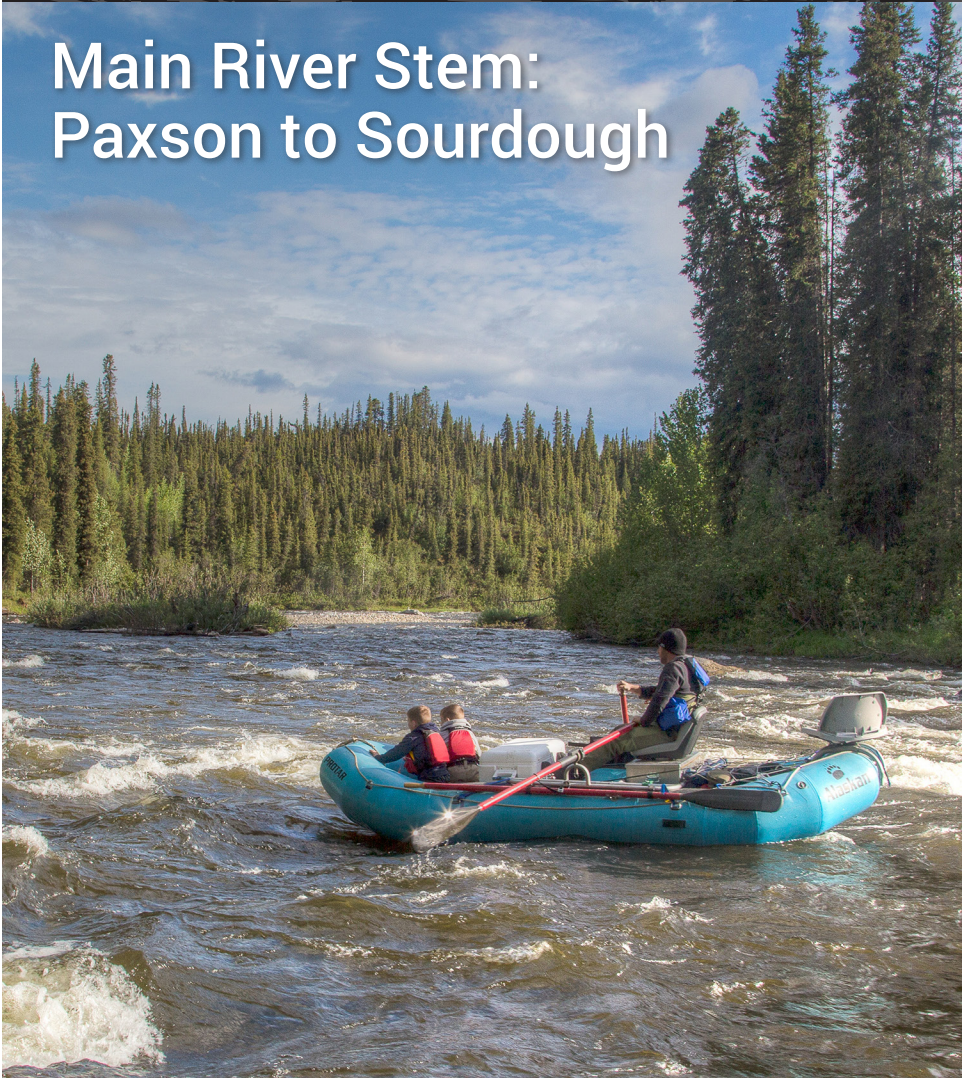


NATIONAL
CONSERVATION
LANDS







Floater's Guide

Gulkana Wild and Scenic River

Main River Stem: Paxson to Sourdough



Legend

-  Gulkana Wild and Scenic River corridor boundary
-  Road
-  River
-  Rapids
-  Campground
-  Boat Launch

DENALI HWY

Delta Ways

MP 21.5



Tangle

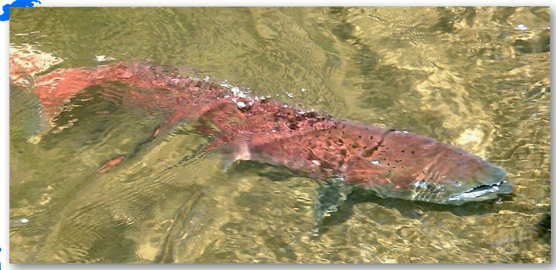
Maclaren River

ALPHA

North Branch

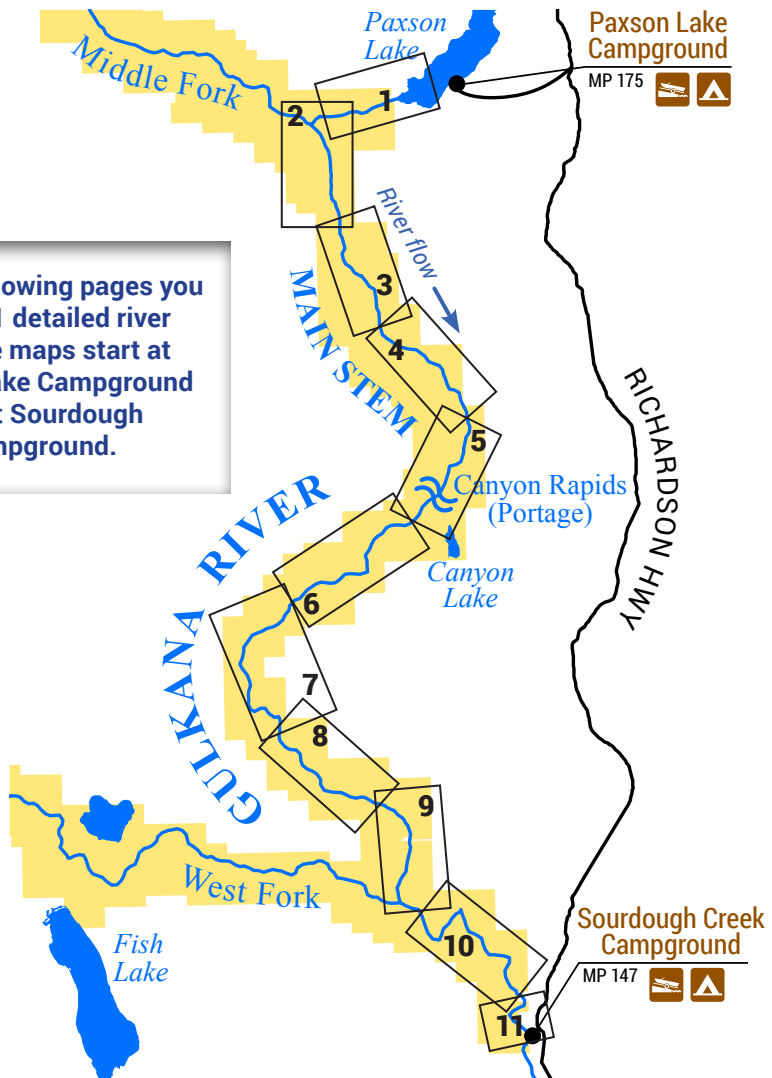
South Branch

Tyone River











On the following pages you will find 11 detailed river maps. The maps start at Paxson Lake Campground and end at Sourdough Creek Campground.



Legend for Maps 1-11

-  1-2 tents
 -  3-4 tents
 -  5-6 tents
- } Recommended campsites based on number of tents each can accommodate most comfortably
-  Gulkana Wild and Scenic River corridor boundary
 -  1.5 river miles calculated from Paxson outlet
 -  0.3 river mile and location of campsite (river right or river left)

Using this guide to help plan your trip on the Gulkana

This floater's guide is organized to help you better plan your Gulkana trip by recommending and giving descriptions of campsites along the river. You can use this information to determine how far downriver the next suitable campsite for your group may be and Class I-III rapid locations.

If you are easily impacted by other users, the guide gives you options for campsites just before and after "bottleneck" areas like the confluence of the Main Stem and the Middle Fork and the portage area around Canyon Rapids.

Please do not create new campsites within the corridor. Newly created sites are difficult to rehabilitate and can last for many years, impacting the wild character of the river corridor.

River managers are trying to encourage the use of appropriate, sustainable campsites along the river corridor. By using campsites appropriate for your group size, you will be helping to limit further impacts to the site.

Eddy

Calm water that is created downstream of an obstacle (rock or log) in the water or from a bend in the river.

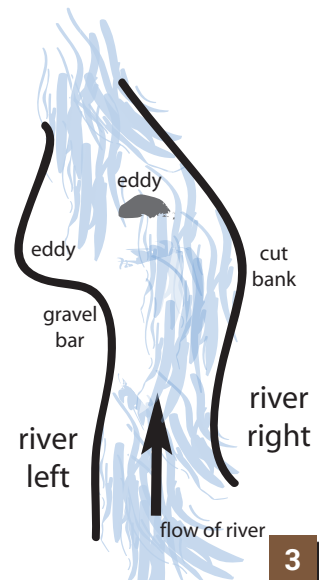
Map scale and orientation

All maps are presented at a scale of 1:24,000 or 1 inch equals 0.4 miles. They are orientated to match the river bends and turns that you will experience as you are traveling downstream. An arrow on each map shows the direction of north.

Ask yourself . . .

- what size campsite will the group require?
- what time of the day is it?
- are we able to push on to the next site?
- if we don't stop here, will there be more sites available downriver or will they all be taken?
- are we easily impacted by other users?

Example: It is late in the day. You have just finished running your boats through Canyon Rapids, where you had planned on camping. There are several other groups already camped at the portage area. Upon looking at the floater's guide, you find a campsite that is just downriver from the portage that will allow your group to camp in solitude without having to float much farther downstream.



Keeping the banks and water of the Gulkana pristine

Every year, BLM river patrol crews clean up trash, toilet paper, and human waste from the banks of the Gulkana River. This garbage, left behind by river users, can alter the pristine nature of the river and negatively impact other users' wilderness experience. Help maintain the Gulkana Wild and Scenic River through the use of portable toilet systems and a pack it in, pack it out philosophy. A boater dump station is located at Sourdough Creek Campground for your convenience.



Responsible use of public land will ensure that you can enjoy a quality experience for years to come.

Note: GPS locations of the campsites are listed next to each campsite description and are approximate and intended to serve as a general reference only. GPS locations are listed using the following system and datum:

System: Latitude/Longitude in Degrees.Minutes.Seconds

Datum: WGS 84

Personal GPS units should be set to match this coordinate system and datum for best results in locating campsites.

Recommended campsites for river floaters

0.2
left

TaK' ATS' NA' Cove N62.51.22, W145.36.55 High, upland campsite with good views of the Paxson Lake outlet and surrounding hills. In Ahtna, TaK' ATS' NA' means "Springwater Creek," the place where the clear waters of TaK' ATS' Bene' or "Springwater Lake" become a flowing river. A traditional Ahtna trail crossed here and followed the Middle Fork toward Dickey Lake. *Recommended group size: 6. Recommended number of tents: 3.*

0.3
right

Huffman's Haunt N62.51.25, W145.36.51 Nice, flat upland camping area. Please respect private property located adjacent to this campsite. L.L. "Doc" Huffman hunted and trapped in the Middle Fork Gulkana area in the 1900's. *Recommended group size: 12. Recommended number of tents: 6.*

1.0
right

Willow Run N62.51.15, W145.37.54 Open, upland campsite in the willows with good river access for fishing. *Recommended group size: 6. Recommended number of tents: 3.*

2.2
left

Neeley Grove N62.51.03, W145.39.43 Shady campsite in a grove of cottonwood trees. Look for a landing in a small eddy on river left. Tom Neeley ran freight sleds up the Middle Fork to the Valdez Creek Mining District in the 1900's. *Recommended group size: 3. Recommended number of tents: 1.*

Map 1, river miles 0 - 2.4

The first 3 miles of the Main Stem of the Gulkana have Class II rapids with frequent rocks and some tight turns. At low water levels, lining your craft may be necessary.



BLM/Dennis Green

It takes approximately 3-4 hours to row from Paxson Lake Campground to the outlet depending on wind.

Neeley Grove

2.0

1.5

1.0

Willow Run

0.5

TaK' ATS' NA' Cove

Huffman's Haunt

0.0

Paxson
Lake

to Paxson Lake
Campground
(approximately
4.5 miles from outlet)



2.6
left

French Meadow N62.50.53, W145.40.14 Large, multiple use ATV and river campsite with many species of Alaska vegetation and wildflowers. Look for an opening on river left, just past a stand of willows and alder. Ben French trapped and prospected on the Middle Fork of the Gulkana around Dickey Lake in the early 1900's, selling his furs at the Meier's Roadhouse during the summer months. *Recommended group size: 12. Recommended number of tents: 6.*

2.7
left

NitiniTAANI Camp N62.50.50, W145.40.11 NitiniTAANI in Ahtna means "End of Trail Camp." The ridge across from this campsite is where Ahtna travelers could turn towards Dickey Lake or continue north to villages and camps along Paxson Lake's shores. Shady, multiple use ATV and river campsite in a stand of spruce trees. *Recommended group size: 8. Recommended number of tents: 4.*

2.8
island

Moore Island N62.50.48, W145.40.09 Look for the left channel once you reach the Middle Fork confluence to access this multiple use ATV and river campsite. This campsite is located on an island; use portable river toilets. M.W. Slim Moore ran a trapline on the Middle Fork from 1927 to 1938 and was recognized as the first professional hunting guide in the area. *Recommended group size: 8. Recommended number of tents: 4.*

2.9
right

Meier's Roadhouse N62.50.44, W145.40.10 Campsite is suitable for large groups and provides access to the Twelvemile Creek ATV trail. Firewood is scarce; please do not cut live trees. Charles J. Meier built Meier's Roadhouse in 1906 which was a popular starting point for the Middle Fork Trail that led to the Valdez Creek Mining District. The roadhouse could accommodate forty head of stock and more than 50 people. *Recommended group size: 12. Recommended number of tents: 6.*

3.2
left

Gillespie Gulch N62.50.31, W145.39.55 A nice stop just downstream of the Middle Fork confluence, located in a shady grove of spruce trees. *Recommended group size: 4. Recommended number of tents: 2.*

3.3
right

Norwood's Perch N62.50.25, W145.40.04 Shady campsite in a stand of spruce with flat tent spots. Approach from the river can be difficult. Al Norwood was a trapper who helped to build the Dawson Cabin and was known for his moonshine distilling. *Recommended group size: 8. Recommended number of tents: 4.*

3.4
left

Dawson's Cabin N62.50.22, W145.39.59 The trapper cabin at this location was built in the 1920's by Barney Dawson and Al Norwood and was used for many years as a winter trapping shelter. Views of the Alphabet Hills can be seen to the west. *Recommended group size: 8. Recommended number of tents: 4.*

4.1
left

Squirrel Run N62.49.51, W145.39.54 Nice, secluded campsite nestled in a stand of spruce trees. *Recommended group size: 8. Recommended number of tents: 4.*

4.4
left

Grassy Knoll N62.49.32, W145.39.59 Flat, grassy open campsite with easy river access. *Recommended group size: 8. Recommended number of tents: 4.*

4.8
right

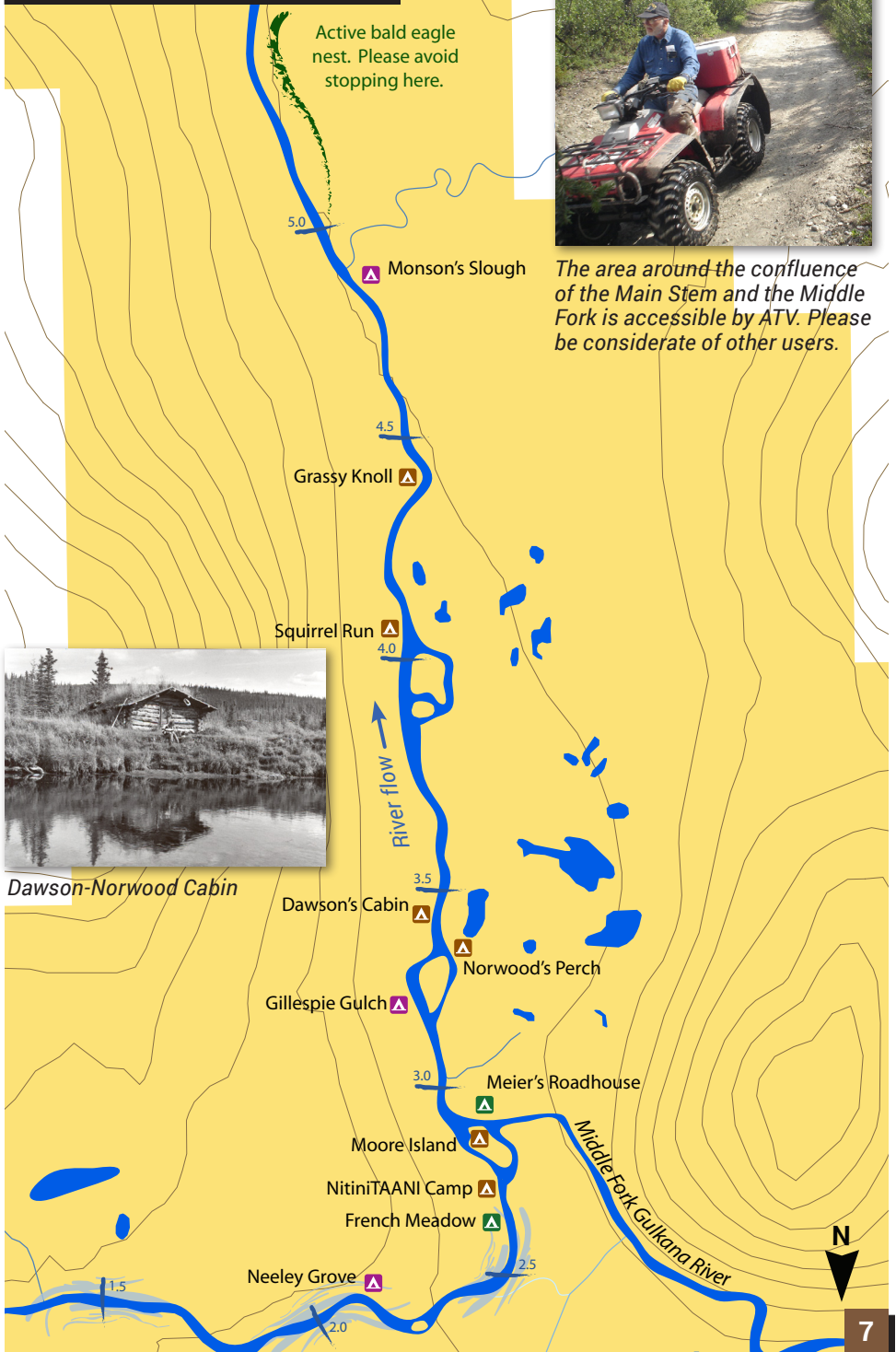
Monson's Slough N62.49.13, W145.39.49 Shady campsite with good views of the river. This area may have been used by Dawson and Norwood on their trapline, as there used to be remnants of an old structure nearby. *Recommended group size: 4. Recommended number of tents: 2.*

Map 2, river miles 1.5 - 5.5

Active bald eagle nest. Please avoid stopping here.



The area around the confluence of the Main Stem and the Middle Fork is accessible by ATV. Please be considerate of other users.



Dawson-Norwood Cabin

Monson's Slough

Grassy Knoll

Squirrel Run

Dawson's Cabin

Norwood's Perch

Gillespie Gulch

Meier's Roadhouse

Moore Island

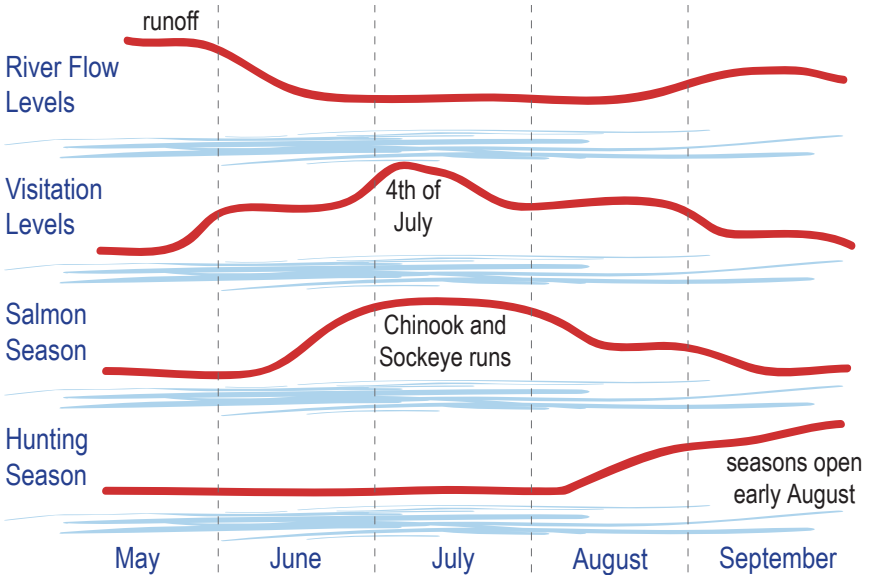
NitiniTAANI Camp

French Meadow

Neeley Grove

The impacts of outside forces . . .

Knowing various characteristics about a river will give you more information to help plan the kind of river trip you would like to experience. Fourth of July, for example, is not a time to float the Gulkana if you are searching for solitude. Runoff may be the time to float if you want bigger rapids and a quicker float. The graph below gives you a general idea of what outside factors can impact your floating experience and at what times they would most likely occur. Variations are always possible.



6.0
left

Beaver Flats N62.48.14, W145.39.22 Flat, gravel bar site suitable for large groups at low water. *Recommended group size: 12. Recommended number of tents: 6.*

8.1
island

Caribou Island N62.47.19, W145.38.08 Open gravel campsite with good views of the river. This campsite is located on an island; use portable river toilets. *Recommended group size: 8. Recommended number of tents: 4.*

9.6
right

Owl Roost N62.46.54, W145.37.34 Hidden upland campsite located in stand of spruce. Look for a trail leading from the river into the trees. Owls frequent the blackened, burned area that was caused by a river user in 2004. *Recommended group size: 4. Recommended number of tents: 2.*

10.2
right

Sourdough Gene N62.46.39, W145.37.42 Sourdough Gene, a Native elder from Gakona Village, and his family subsisted all along the Gulkana River during the 1920's. Upland campsite nestled in spruce trees with nice views of the river. *Recommended group size: 8. Recommended number of tents: 4.*

Map 3, river miles 5.5 - 11.0



Doc Huffman, L.A. Cauter, and Al Norwood at Paxson Lake Cabin, July 1933 or 1934.



The results of a careless river user.
Please be responsible with your campfires by containing them in a firepan. Fireworks are prohibited within the Gulkana Wild and Scenic River Corridor.

12.4
left

K'EY Camp N62.45.37, W145.35.38 Ahtna used K' EY, "birch," to make baskets and containers. Upland campsite surrounded by dwarf willow and spruce. *Recommended group size: 8. Recommended number of tents: 4.*

13.3
island

Potty Island N62.45.22, W145.35.14 Popular island campsite named for an outhouse that was once located here. The outhouse was removed in 1997 to avoid water contamination. Campsites are found on both ends of the island, use portable river toilets. *Recommended group size: 12. Recommended number of tents: 6.*

13.4
right

River Otter Slough N62.45.15, W145.35.16 Popular campsite for multi-party groups when other users camp at Potty Island. The site is relatively flat and offers some shade cover under large spruce trees. *Recommended group size: 4. Recommended number of tents: 2.*

15.6
right

Room with a View N62.44.09, W145.34.18 Site is located on top of a small ridge overlooking the river. Not much shade, but offers great views of the meandering Gulkana. *Recommended group size: 10. Recommended number of tents: 5.*

15.9
right

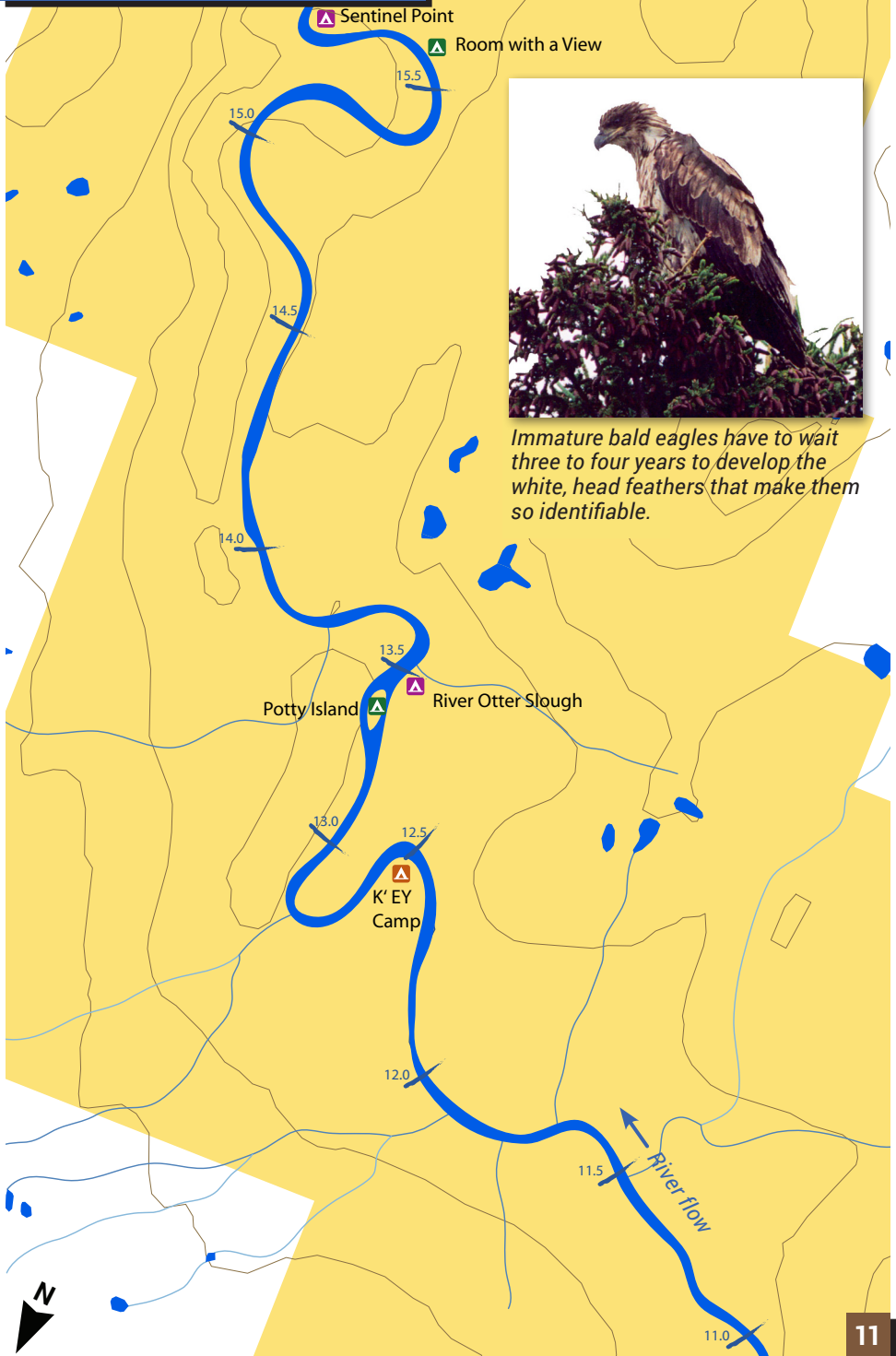
Sentinel Point N62.44.14, W145.33.54 Flat, open campsite with little shade or tree cover. This is a good stop before the canyon, especially if it is late in the day. *Recommended group size: 4. Recommended number of tents: 2.*

Bald and brassy . . . eagles along the Gulkana

As funding has been available, the BLM has conducted annual bald eagle productivity surveys within the Gulkana River watershed since 1976. Through these surveys, the BLM has determined that nearly 100 nesting territories exist within the Gulkana River drainage; however, actual nest occupancy and fledgling productivity rates vary from year to year depending on various climatic and biological influences. Correlation of eagle productivity data, identifying the amount and types of recreational use along specific segments of the Gulkana River and its tributaries, enables public land managers to detect trends in eagle productivity related to increased recreational use on this popular, road-accessible river.



Map 4, river miles 11.0 - 16.0



Immature bald eagles have to wait three to four years to develop the white, head feathers that make them so identifiable.

Fishing on the Gulkana

Habitat is everything!

Alaska is the last great stronghold for healthy stocks of wild salmon. Your positive actions to protect upland areas, riverbank vegetation and waterways help sustain this tremendous natural resource for ourselves and future generations.



Rainbow among reds.

USFWS

While enjoying Alaska's abundance make sure you are informed and aware of regulations specific to recreating and fishing on the Gulkana.



Before fishing the Gulkana, refer to Alaska Department of Fish and Game regulations for allowable fishing techniques, limits and permit requirements.

Catch and release of fish

A successful catch and release is one where the fish swims away unharmed and lively into the current. Always remember:

- don't tire the fish out with a long struggle
- hold the fish firmly but gently in the lower jaw not the gills, head or belly
- keep the fish submerged under water for the entire hook removal and release process

Selective harvest

Selective harvest is harvesting only the fish you intend to use for food and releasing the rest of your catch unharmed. This helps to provide a diversity of fishing opportunities while assuring the conservation of Alaska's stocks of fish.

Learn more at the ADF&G Sport Fish Division Web site

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=divisions.sfmission>

The dynamic gravel bar

Gravel bars and islands change every year, depending on how the river breaks up and how the water level fluctuates throughout the season. These changes affect the surface area of the gravel bars and the size of the stones that are deposited on them.

- The durable surfaces of gravel bars make them ideal campsites and camping on a gravel bar makes less of an impact than on fragile upland sites.
- A particular gravel bar may be ideal one season, and awful the next, due to spring breakup. The quality of the gravel bar campsites found in this guide will vary from year to year.

Fire ring or trash can?



90% of the garbage picked up on the Gulkana NWSR is partially burned and predominantly found in the fire rings.

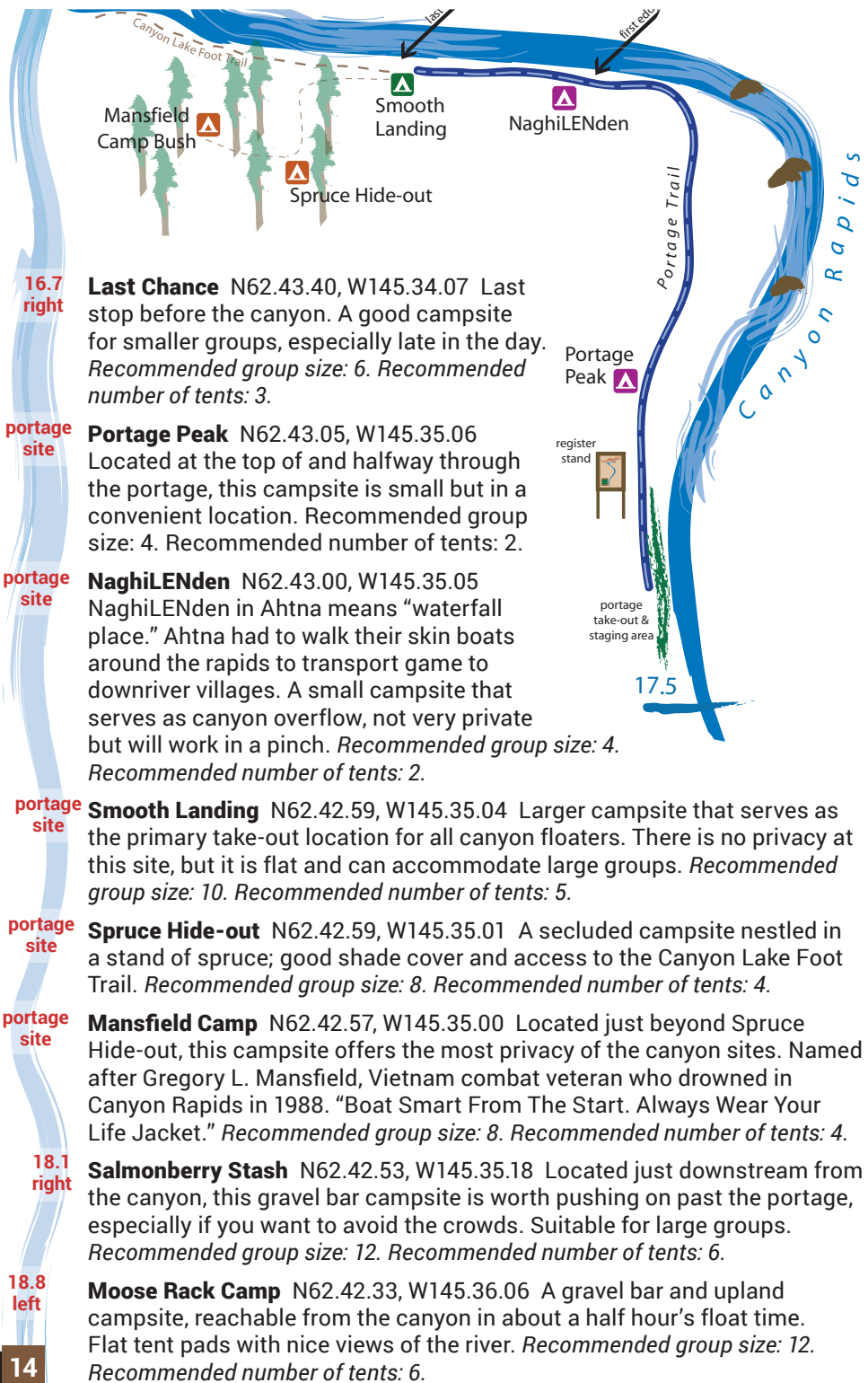
Small fires are not as hot as larger ones and do not allow for trash and aluminum to burn. The result is partially burned cans and garbage left for the next river user to find. Using a fire pan and being sure to pack out all garbage will help reduce the amount of litter on the banks of the Gulkana River.

Fire pans, like the one shown right, provide the ambiance of a campfire without the impacts. Because the fire pan must be packed out, it encourages the proper disposal of all garbage in a trash bag instead of burning it. Ashes from a fire pan should be packed out as well.

What doesn't burn?

- glass bottles
- aluminum foil
- aluminum used to wrap candy bars
- aluminum cans
- plastic bottles
- tin cans
- shell casings
- twist ties





Last Chance N62.43.40, W145.34.07 Last stop before the canyon. A good campsite for smaller groups, especially late in the day. *Recommended group size: 6. Recommended number of tents: 3.*

Portage Peak N62.43.05, W145.35.06 Located at the top of and halfway through the portage, this campsite is small but in a convenient location. *Recommended group size: 4. Recommended number of tents: 2.*

NaghiLEnden N62.43.00, W145.35.05 NaghiLEnden in Ahtna means "waterfall place." Ahtna had to walk their skin boats around the rapids to transport game to downriver villages. A small campsite that serves as canyon overflow, not very private but will work in a pinch. *Recommended group size: 4. Recommended number of tents: 2.*

Smooth Landing N62.42.59, W145.35.04 Larger campsite that serves as the primary take-out location for all canyon floaters. There is no privacy at this site, but it is flat and can accommodate large groups. *Recommended group size: 10. Recommended number of tents: 5.*

Spruce Hide-out N62.42.59, W145.35.01 A secluded campsite nestled in a stand of spruce; good shade cover and access to the Canyon Lake Foot Trail. *Recommended group size: 8. Recommended number of tents: 4.*

Mansfield Camp N62.42.57, W145.35.00 Located just beyond Spruce Hide-out, this campsite offers the most privacy of the canyon sites. Named after Gregory L. Mansfield, Vietnam combat veteran who drowned in Canyon Rapids in 1988. "Boat Smart From The Start. Always Wear Your Life Jacket." *Recommended group size: 8. Recommended number of tents: 4.*

Salmonberry Stash N62.42.53, W145.35.18 Located just downstream from the canyon, this gravel bar campsite is worth pushing on past the portage, especially if you want to avoid the crowds. Suitable for large groups. *Recommended group size: 12. Recommended number of tents: 6.*

Moose Rack Camp N62.42.33, W145.36.06 A gravel bar and upland campsite, reachable from the canyon in about a half hour's float time. Flat tent pads with nice views of the river. *Recommended group size: 12. Recommended number of tents: 6.*

Map 5, river miles 16.0 - 20.0



Canyon Rapids at high water.

BLM/Dennis Green

Canyon Lake

Moose Rack Camp

There are Class II rapids for about 8.5 river miles beyond the canyon.

Canyon Lake Foot Trail
(1 mile long)

Salmonberry Stash

Canyon Rapids Portage
(see detail)

Canyon Rapids is a series of rapids in a narrow channel of the river. They are rated Class III-IV depending on water levels. Scout the rapids before running them to minimize risk.

River flow

Last Chance

Room with a View

20.7
right

Alvin's Bar N62.41.51, W145.38.37 Large, open campsite suitable for the largest groups with interesting views of the river bluffs just downstream. This site has numerous flat tent pads and easy access to the river. Alvin Paxson built the Paxson Roadhouse in 1907 which served as a stopping point on the trail west across the Tangle Lakes region towards the Valdez Creek Mining District. *Recommended group size: 12. Recommended number of tents: 6.*

22.2
right

Sunny Bar N62.41.06, W145.40.19 Large, open gravel bar campsite that changes character annually due to breakup. Although this site is a bit rocky, it is a good choice for larger groups when no other site can be found to accommodate the number of people. *Recommended group size: 10. Recommended number of tents: 5.*

23.2
left

Fireweed Flats N62.40.54, W145.41.52 Look for the landing in a small eddy on river left. Shady campsite surrounded by spruce trees. *Recommended group size: 6. Recommended number of tents: 3.*



Early September morning mist at Alvin's Bar campsite. Late August and early September can be a relaxing time to float the Gulkana. The crisp mornings signal the end of the salmon runs and the associated anglers. Aspen start to turn bright yellow and an occasional caribou may put on a show by swimming across the river.

Map 6, river miles 20.0 - 24.0

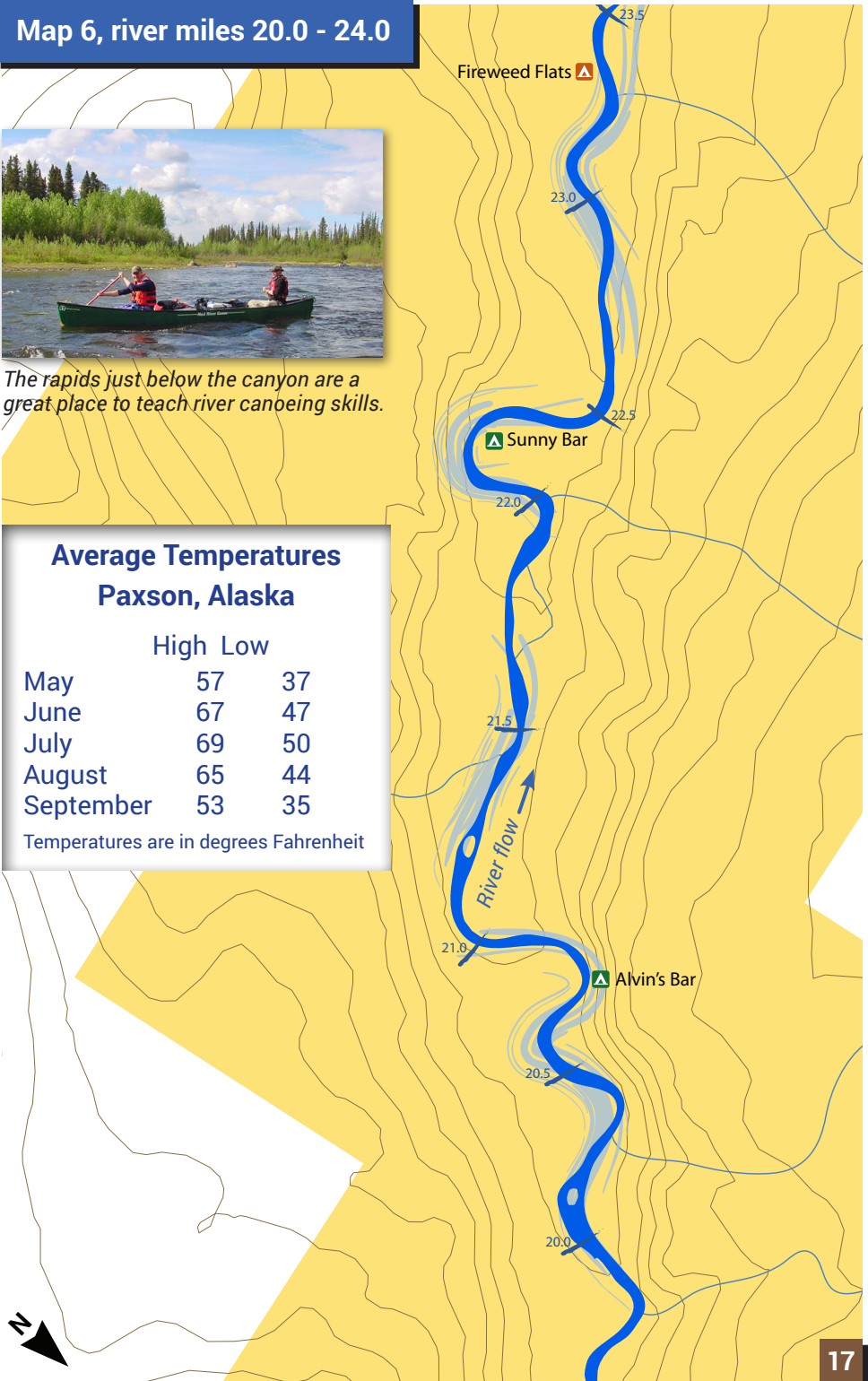


The rapids just below the canyon are a great place to teach river canoeing skills.

Average Temperatures Paxson, Alaska

	High	Low
May	57	37
June	67	47
July	69	50
August	65	44
September	53	35

Temperatures are in degrees Fahrenheit



24.8
right

Cottonwood Corner N62.40.10, W145.43.08 Located next to a stand of cottonwood trees, this campsite has nice, flat tent pads and is a good break from the rapids. *Recommended group size: 6. Recommended number of tents: 3.*

28.0
left

Long Bar N62.38.17, W145.43.12 Long gravel bar suitable for larger groups at low water. *Recommended group size: 8. Recommended number of tents: 4.*

29.0
left

Joe Secondchief N62.38.23, W145.43.03 Upland campsite in a stand of spruce trees. Look for the eddy on river left just next to the campsite. Named after an Ahtna trapper in the lower Gulkana River region. *Recommended group size: 12. Recommended number of tents: 6.*

History that travels along the riverbanks

For hundreds of years, Native Americans, trappers, prospectors, miners, freighters, and modern adventurers motivated by survival, wild game, furs, minerals, and pleasure have followed the course of the Gulkana River and its tributaries. Evidence from within the Gulkana River watershed indicates that the Ahtna Athabaskans occupied the area at



Neeley Trapper Cabin



Paxson Lodge

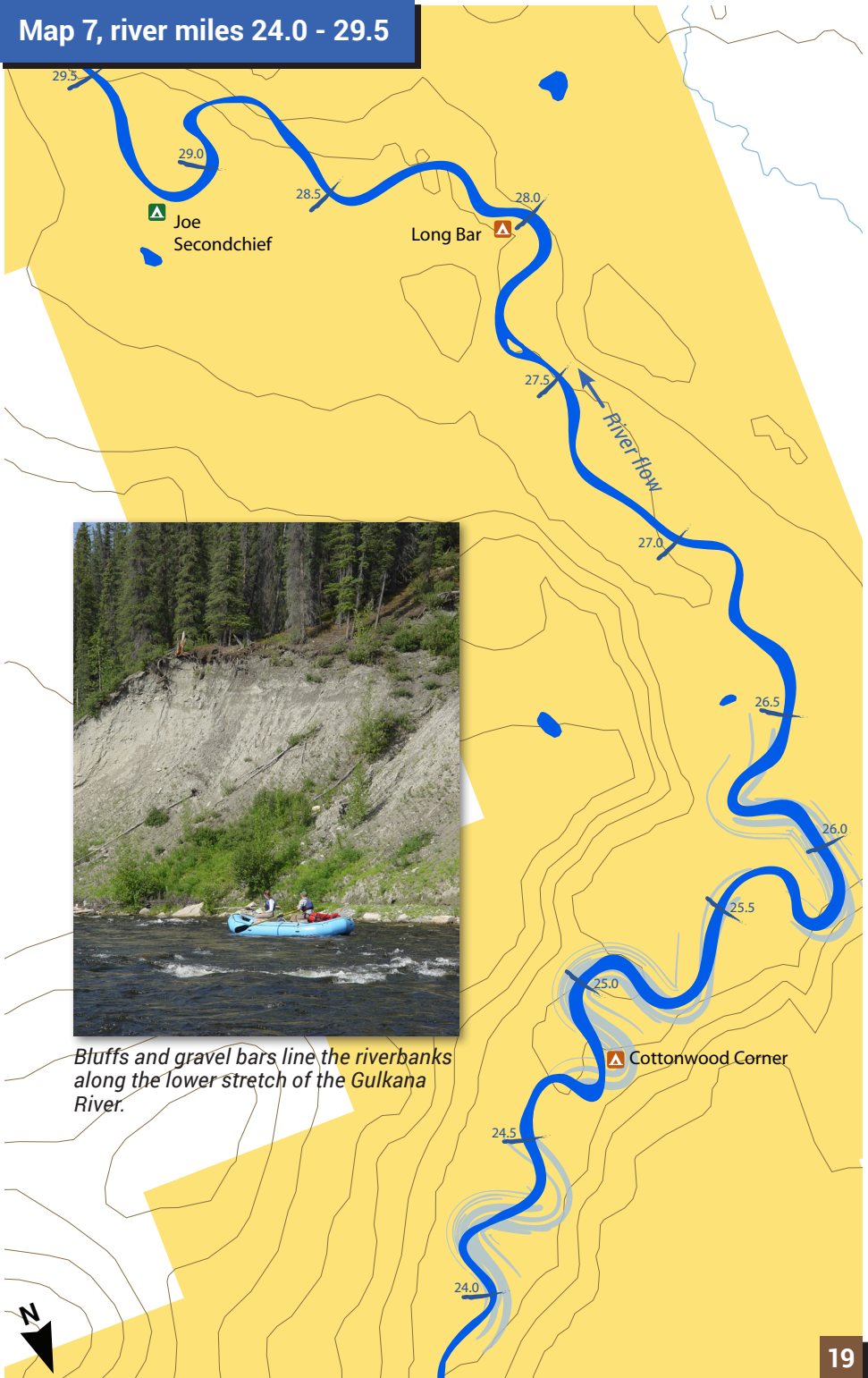


4-Mile Trapper Cabin

least 1,500 years ago, with villages located at Bear Creek, Gulkana, and Paxson Lake. Miners penetrated the area en masse during the late nineteenth century after the Klondike gold rush of 1898, and after the discovery of gold at Valdez Creek in the upper Susitna region in 1903.

During the gold rush era, roadhouses spread throughout the region, serving as valuable staging points for miners and freighters traveling along the West Fork and Middle Fork trails to reach the Valdez Creek Mining District. Horse-drawn caravans and dog teams laden with mining equipment and supplies followed the frozen Gulkana River into the Upper Susitna drainage. Although the Gulkana route to the mines practically disappeared upon the completion of the Alaska Railroad to Cantwell in 1919, the river still continues to provide access for modern day hunters, trappers, and river enthusiasts.

Map 7, river miles 24.0 - 29.5



Bluffs and gravel bars line the riverbanks along the lower stretch of the Gulkana River.



30.5
right

Wickersham Bar N62.37.27, W145.42.01 Flat, open gravel bar. This campsite receives substantial sunlight on sunny days. L.S. Wickersham mined, trapped, and freighted in and out of the Valdez Creek Mining District on the Denali Highway via the Gulkana River in 1916 and 1917. *Recommended group size: 12. Recommended number of tents: 6.*

30.9
left

Stickwan Bar N62.37.16, W145.41.27 Large, open gravel bar area. Tent pads are screened from the river by small stands of willow, providing extra privacy. Named after a Native miner and trapper from Gulkana Village. *Recommended group size: 8. Recommended number of tents: 4.*

31.4
right

Tenas Pete Bluff N62.37.22, W145.40.45 Campsite is located across from a bluff. Look for the trail leading into the bushes, where you will find nice tent pads on fine gravels. Named after a Native miner and trapper who operated in the Gulkana River region. *Recommended group size: 8. Recommended number of tents: 4.*

32.9
right

Monohan Flats N62.36.49, W145.39.28 Open upland area with an easy gravel landing. Peter Monohan was commonly referred to as "one of the most reliable and best informed prospectors in Alaska" during the early 1900's and was one of the first men to discover gold at Valdez Creek. *Recommended group size: 6. Recommended number of tents: 3.*

33.2
right

HwTSII K'AE N62.36.39, W145.39.17 Upland campsite nestled in spruce trees with a nice view of the river. This is the last site before the West Fork confluence. *Recommended group size: 8. Recommended number of tents: 4.*

Multiple use - Multiple users

Around river mile 35, floaters can expect to see motorized craft traveling both up and downstream. When you encounter a motorized craft, remember:

- motorized boats should be courteous of non-motorized boats in narrow river sections and in rapids
- the wake of a motorized boat can easily swamp a canoe
- a non-motorized boat should row to one side to allow the motor boat to maneuver through the deeper channel



Map 8, river miles 29.5 - 34.0



1900's prospector,
Peter Monohan

HwTSII K'AE in Ahtna means "Beaver Dam Place." This was the last place on the river many Ahtna would place fish traps since they believed that salmon upstream from this area didn't taste as good.



Horace Wickersham, Anne, and L.S.
Wickersham at Valdez Creek, Alaska.

HwTSII K'AE

Monohan Flats

Tenas Pete Bluff

Stickwan Bar

Wickersham Bar

River flow

Counting the Gulkana's fish

For the last several years, the BLM has worked cooperatively with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) to operate and manage a fish counting tower on the Main Stem of the Gulkana River. This work is to more accurately estimate the annual return of Chinook and sockeye salmon to the Gulkana. The information collected provides a clear picture of escapement numbers, the strength of returning salmon runs, and valuable data to fisheries biologists. The tower, shown below operates from June through mid-August, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Biologists count the fish as they pass over the light-colored tarp.



Escapement

The number of fish allowed to escape capture, participate in spawning, and complete the life cycle. The number is established by ADF&G to achieve maximum sustained populations.

36.8
left

Nicklie Bar N62.34.35, W145.37.37 Large gravel bar campsite located just upstream of the West Fork confluence. The character of this site changes annually due to breakup. Named after a Native trapper and miner in Valdez Creek. *Recommended group size: 8. Recommended number of tents: 4.*

37.1
left

West Fork Confluence N62.34.27, W145.37.31 Large gravel bar campsite located at the West Fork confluence. There may be other groups camped here, as it is a very popular stop for motorized users and a great location for king salmon fishing. Camping is available in multiple locations on the large gravel bar. *Recommended group size: 12. Recommended number of tents: 6.*

Map 9, river miles 34.0 - 38.0



Ole Nicklie and his child

West Fork
Confluence

Nicklie Bar



fish counting tower

River flow



Ole Nicklie sledding supplies to Denali in the winter of 1934.



38.2
left

Tansey Bar N62.33.53, W145.36.23 Upland campsite with gravel bar landing. Look for a trail leading through the bushes into the trees. Jake Tansey, an Ahtna Native, pioneered a route from the headwaters of the Susitna River, up the Tyone River, and down the West Fork of the Gulkana River to Copper Center. *Recommended group size: 8. Recommended number of tents: 4.*

38.6
right

Chinook Bar N62.33.59, W145.35.50 Large, grassy upland area easily seen from the river. *Recommended group size: 6. Recommended number of tents: 3.*

39.0
left

Hoyt Bar N62.33.42, W145.35.43 Upland campsite with gravel bar landing. Look for a trail leading through the bushes into the trees. Charles Levi Hoyt was a popular miner, trapper, and postmaster who established the Gulkana Trading Post and Hotel in 1907 at Gulkana. *Recommended group size: 8. Recommended number of tents: 4.*

40.8
right

Allen Bar N62.33.49, W145.33.59 Gravel bar campsite that changes character annually due to breakup. Lt. Henry Allen of the U.S. Army explored the Copper River region in 1885 and was probably one of the first white men to view the mouth of the Gulkana, which he named Tonkina. *Recommended group size: 8. Recommended number of tents: 4.*

42.0
left

Hart Bar N62.33.12, W145.32.54 Upland and gravel bar campsite, suitable for larger groups. John Hart originally opened the Sourdough Roadhouse in 1903. *Recommended group size: 12. Recommended number of tents: 6.*

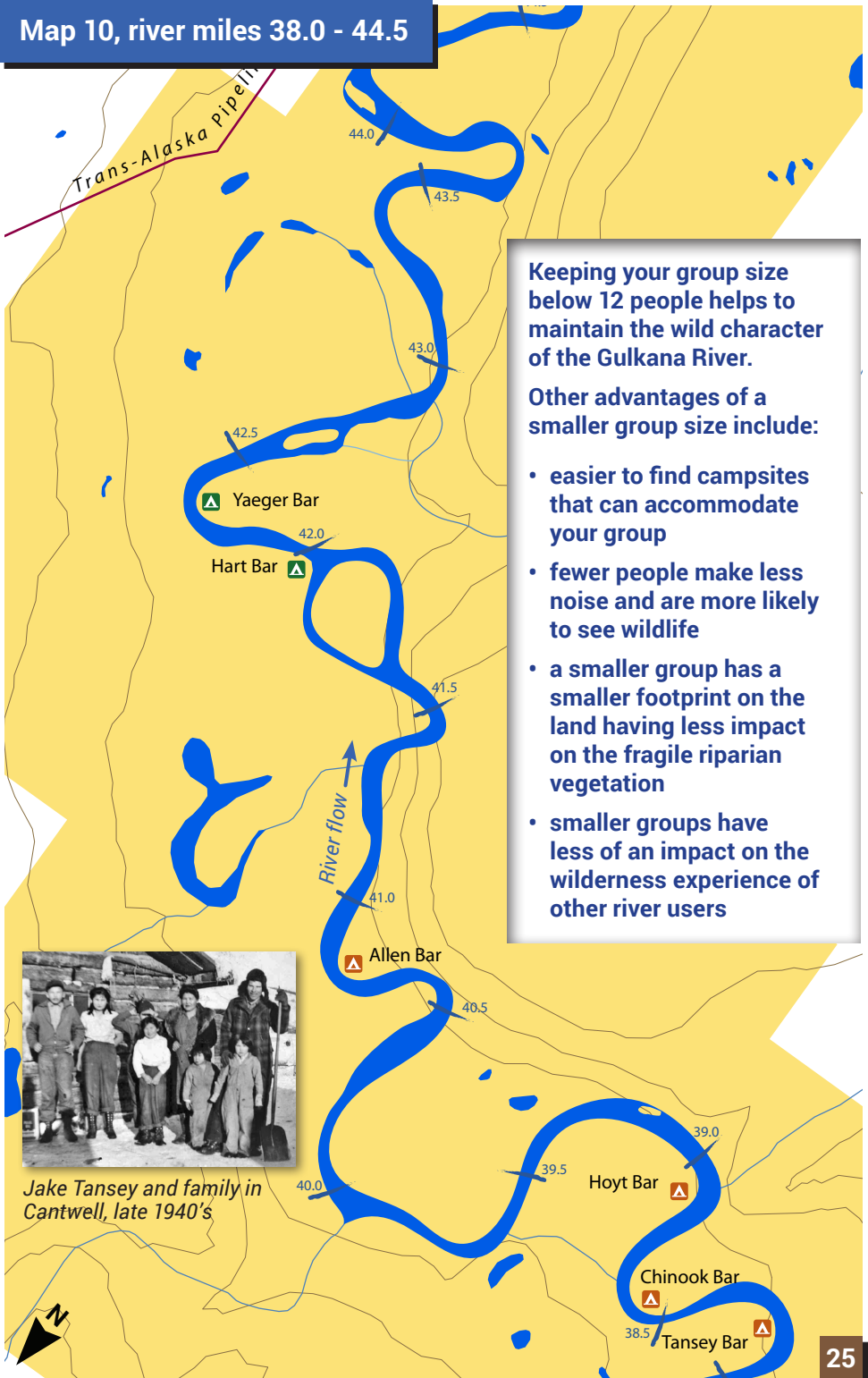
42.3
right

Yaeger Bar N62.33.13, W145.32.26 Last campsite before the take-out at Sourdough, has large gravel bar beach and good fishing access. Mrs. Nellie Yaeger, owner of the Sourdough Roadhouse between 1908 and 1922, was well known for her good cooking and hospitality. *Recommended group size: 12. Recommended number of tents: 6.*



Sourdough Roadhouse on the Valdez-Fairbanks Road with Mrs. N Yaeger as proprietor.

Map 10, river miles 38.0 - 44.5



Keeping your group size below 12 people helps to maintain the wild character of the Gulkana River.

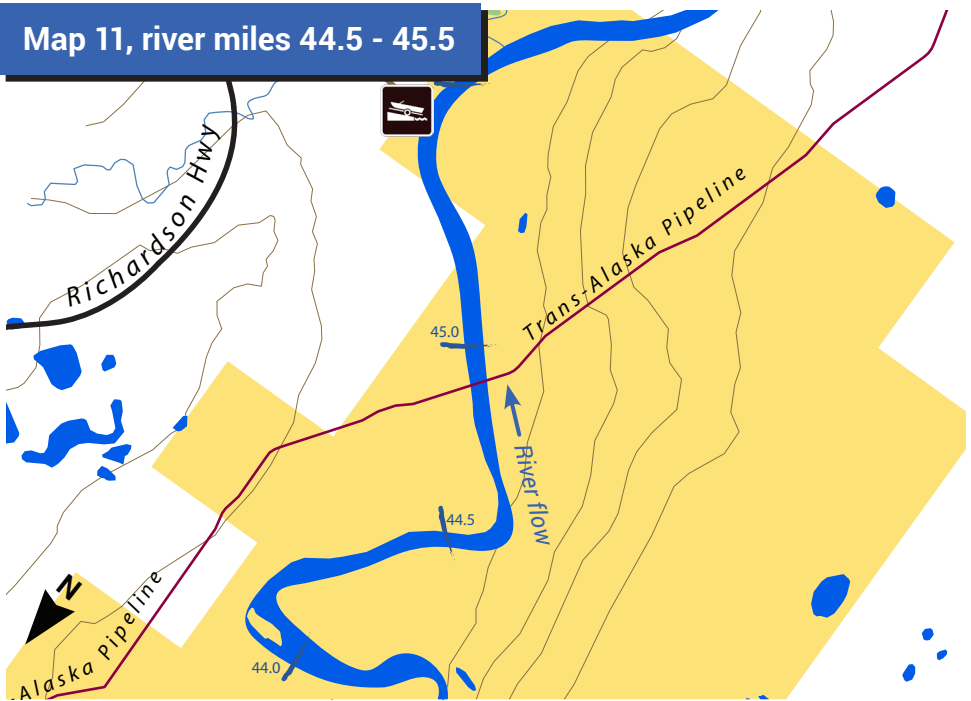
Other advantages of a smaller group size include:

- easier to find campsites that can accommodate your group
- fewer people make less noise and are more likely to see wildlife
- a smaller group has a smaller footprint on the land having less impact on the fragile riparian vegetation
- smaller groups have less of an impact on the wilderness experience of other river users



Jake Tansey and family in Cantwell, late 1940's

Map 11, river miles 44.5 - 45.5



“Move over, I was here first!”

- Sourdough boat launch etiquette

- Use the boat launch only for launching and taking out your craft
- Unload or load all gear at the staging area just upstream of the boat launch
- Be considerate of other users by spending as little time as possible on the launch itself
- Move vehicles out of the way of traffic, utilizing staging and parking areas for securing gear and boats



Portable Toilets

There are many different models of portable river toilets on the market, ranging from liquid systems that must be emptied in an approved septic disposal site, to systems that utilize liquid absorbing chemicals and environmentally safe, biodegradable bags that can be disposed in the landfill. Which system you choose depends on what suits your needs and comfort levels best. Below are a few models available.

Liquid Systems



ECO-safe™



River Bank™



Scat Packer™

Dry Systems



the PUP™
privacy shelter



the PETT®

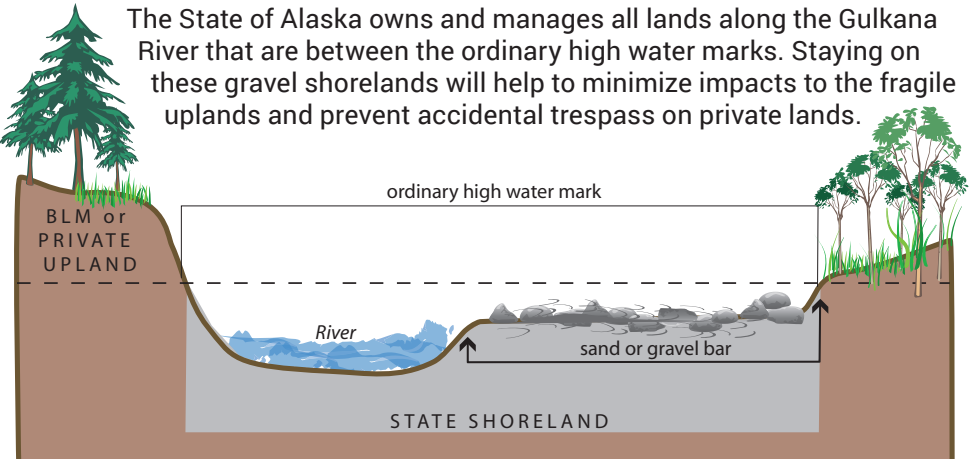
**A boater dump station is located
at Sourdough Campground
for your convenience.**

For more information contact the
Glennallen Field Office at (907) 822-3217.

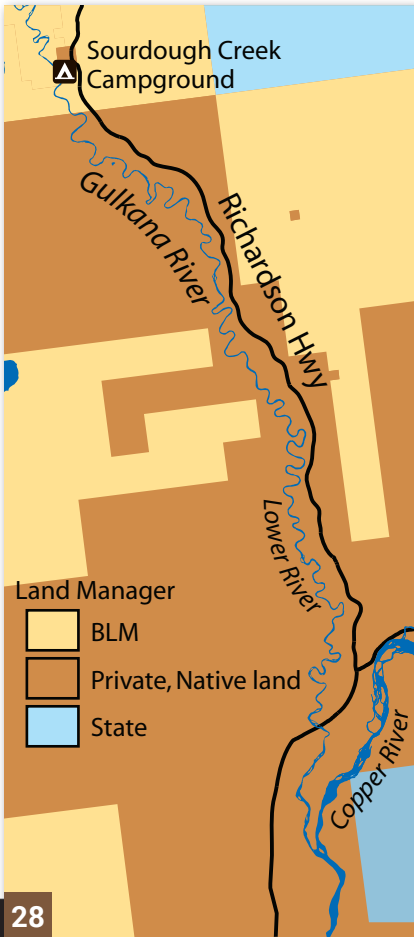


State shorelands along the Gulkana

The State of Alaska owns and manages all lands along the Gulkana River that are between the ordinary high water marks. Staying on these gravel shorelands will help to minimize impacts to the fragile uplands and prevent accidental trespass on private lands.



The lower river - Sourdough to the bridge



If you float the portion of the Gulkana south of Sourdough Creek Campground, you should be aware that you are outside of the Wild and Scenic River Corridor and all uplands are owned by the Ahtna Native Corporation. Any camping or travel on these privately owned lands is considered trespass and enforceable by State law.

Please respect private land along the Gulkana by staying on the State owned shorelands and packing out all garbage and human waste.

Legal access points for this Lower River segment include Sourdough Creek Campground, public access (17b) easements located at miles 141, 137 and 129.5 on the Richardson Highway and the south side of the Richardson Highway bridge over the Gulkana River.

If you intend to use or travel across private land, you must obtain a permit from Ahtna Inc. in Glennallen, (907) 822-3476.

Tips for Traveling Safely

Know your limits

The Gulkana River is not a place for a novice boater. Solo travel is not recommended. Always travel with at least two craft in your group. Accidents can happen in seconds and emergency assistance can take many hours to reach you.

Be alert for approaching hazards such as boulders, jagged rocks, large holes and fallen trees. Scout the rapids before attempting passage.

Avoid bears

Keep your campsites extremely clean. Cook and keep food away from tents. Store food in airtight containers so bears can't smell it. Pack out all trash including unburned items from the firepit.

Water

Drink only tap, filtered, treated or boiled water. Drinking untreated water can make you sick.

Suggested equipment

- life jacket: type III or V for each person
- first aid kit
- boat repair kit
- spare oars or paddles
- warm clothing in a "dry bag"
- rain gear
- shovel
- matches in waterproof container
- throwbags or throw cushions
- insect repellent and/or headnet
- bailing device
- fire extinguisher (for motorized craft)
- air pump (for inflatable rafts)
- USGS inch-to-the-mile scale maps

Permitted use on the Gulkana

Anyone wanting to conduct commercial, organized group or competitive activities within the boundaries of the Gulkana Wild and Scenic River Corridor may be required to obtain a Special Recreation Use Permit. This is necessary to minimize potential conflicts among recreational users and protect natural resources. For information about the BLM permit application process, contact the BLM Glennallen Field Office at (907) 822-3217.



Prohibited within the Gulkana Wild and Scenic River Corridor

Help reduce user conflicts and keep the river safe for all visitors by not using fireworks or chainsaws, or shooting for recreation.

What is a “wild” river?

A wild river is... “free of impoundments and generally inaccessible except by trail, with watersheds or shorelines essentially primitive and waters unpolluted . . . representing vestiges of primitive America.”

—Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, section 2 (b) (1)

Safety information and contact numbers

The Gulkana River, although road accessible by Alaska standards, still requires careful planning and thought regarding safety while on the river. Professional medical attention is, at best, several hours and a helicopter flight away. There may be no cell phone or data service on the Gulkana River. Please be prepared.

Alaska State Troopers, Glennallen

(907) 822-3263 or 911

Cross Roads Medical Clinic

PO Box 5, Mile 187 Glenn Hwy
Glennallen, AK 99588
(907) 822-3202

Alaska Fish and Game

PO Box 47, Mile 186 Glenn Hwy
Glennallen, AK 99588
(907) 822-3309

Alaska Department of Natural Resources

Division of Land, Mining, and Water
550 W. 7th Ave, Suite 1070
Anchorage, AK 99501
(907) 269-8600

Ahtna Inc.

PO Box 649, Mile 115 Richardson Hwy
Glennallen, AK 99588
(907) 822-3476

Bureau of Land Management Glennallen Field Office

PO Box 147
Mile 186.5 Glenn Hwy
Glennallen, Alaska 99588
(907) 822-3217

<https://www.blm.gov/office/glennallen-field-office>



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