

DELTA RIVER
Proposed Special Recreation Management Area
Comparison of Alternatives – Recreation

MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES

Objectives:

1. Consistent with public use management provisions in ANILCA, manage to maintain existing ROS classes (roaded natural in portions of scenic portion, primitive and semi-primitive motorized in wild and recreational portions). Recreation setting will be managed as described below:
 - Primitive: This would be the wild portion and a segment of the scenic portion of the Wild and Scenic river corridor. Area is characterized by essentially unmodified natural environment. Concentration of users is very low and evidence of other users is minimal.
 - Semi-primitive motorized: This would cover the recreational portion of the Wild and Scenic river corridor. Area is characterized by a predominantly unmodified natural environment. Concentration of users is low, but there is often evidence of other area users. Area is accessible to powerboats.
 - Roaded natural: This would cover the scenic portion of the Wild and Scenic river corridor, adjacent to the Denali Highway. Area is characterized by a generally natural environment with moderate evidence of the sights and sounds of humans. Concentration of users is low to moderate, and rustic facilities may exist for user convenience and safety.
2. Maintain or enhance resource values.
3. Preserve the free-flowing conditions of the waters within the river corridor.
4. Manage for Class I VRM objectives within the SRMA.
5. Establish management objectives for recreation use within the river corridor.

Description of Area: Existing ANILCA-designated Delta WSR corridor. Lower portion of this SRMA falls within the PLO 5150 utility corridor. Area is 44,460 acres and is all unencumbered BLM land.

Definition of “limited” for OHVs: In this SRMA, limited would mean designation of trails. Goal would be to designate trails to prevent unmanaged proliferation of motorized trails, maintain the existing primitive and semi-primitive experiences, and to facilitate maintenance of designated trails. Secondary goal would be to provide for a designated foot-trail system out of Tangle Lakes campground/Upper Tangle Lakes.

ALTERNATIVES – Delta River SRMA

| DIFFERENCES IN MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE BY ALTERNATIVE | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| Management Actions | Alternative A: Current management | Alternative B: Development end of spectrum | Alternative C: Conserve/maintain end of spectrum | Alternative D |
| Special Area Decision | No SRMA designated. | No SRMA designated, manage under existing 1983 Delta River Management Plan. | SRMA includes WSR corridor plus fore and middle ground viewshed on unencumbered BLM lands. | SRMA as described above. |
| Trails/Off-Highway-Vehicle (OHV) | Portion within TLAD limited to designated trails (most of scenic and wild portions). Otherwise OHV use limited to “existing” trails. | Same as A. | Limited in corridor and viewshed summer and winter. | Limited in summer, open in winter (see designation goals above). OHVs in support of utility corridor will utilize designated trails when possible and existing roads whenever possible. |
| Construction of new airstrips | Not permitted within corridor. | Same as alternative A. | Same as alternative A, and not permitted within viewshed. | Same as alternative A. |
| Construction of new roads | Avoid new construction. Allows for re-alignment of Richardson highway adjacent to recreational portion and replacement of Denali Highway bridge in scenic portion. | Same as alternative A. Consider ROW for access to mining activities in recreational portion of river corridor. | No new road construction in corridor or in viewshed. | Same as alternative A. No new road construction within scenic and wild portions of river corridor. Avoid new road construction within recreational portion of corridor. |

ALTERNATIVES – Delta River SRMA

| Management Actions | Alternative A: Current management | Alternative B: Development end of spectrum | Alternative C: Conserve/maintain end of spectrum | Alternative D |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| Minerals: Locatable minerals | Closed in wild segment. Currently closed in wild portion by ANILCA, open in scenic and recreational portions under PLOs 5180 and 5150, which allow for entry for metaliferous metals. | Recreational and scenic portions should remain open. | Recommend closures in all segments and in viewshed. | Recommend closures in all segments of the corridor. |
| Minerals: Leasable minerals (Oil & Gas) | Currently closed in the wild segment under ANILCA. Closed in the recreational segment under PLO 5150. Closed in the Scenic segment under PLO 5180. | Revoke current withdrawals in recreational and scenic portions. | Maintain current closures for corridor and for viewshed. | Recommend closures in all segments of the corridor. |
| Minerals: Leasable minerals (Coal) | Same as for O&G. | Revoke current withdrawals in recreational and scenic portions but this area (the corridor) not suitable for surface mining of coal under the criteria set forth in 43 CFR 3461.5. | Maintain current closures for corridor and for viewshed. | Maintain current closures in all segments of the corridor. |
| Minerals: Mineral materials | Available in recreational portion in support of highway maintenance/reconstruction, discouraged in scenic and not permitted in wild. | Same as Alternative A. | Not permitted in any portion of river corridor or in viewshed. | Available in recreational portion in support of highway maintenance/reconstruction. Not permitted in scenic and wild portions. |

ALTERNATIVES – Delta River SRMA

| Management Actions | Alternative A: Current management | Alternative B: Development end of spectrum | Alternative C: Conserve/maintain end of spectrum | Alternative D |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| Minerals: Access to mining activity | Occurs summer and winter. | Consider potential for future ROW in recreational portion to access mining activities on west side of river. Construction would be consistent with management of recreational portion of river. | Limit overland access to winter use only. | Overland river crossing only permitted in winter when the river is frozen. Other requests will be considered based on conditions to minimize disturbance to the river. |
| Public use cabins | None authorized. | Consider public cabins in scenic or recreational portion. | No. | No. This includes administrative or emergency use cabins. |
| Special Recreation Permit (SRP) | Permitted on case-by-case basis. | Same as alternative A. | Determine management objectives for recreation use. | Same as C. |
| General visitor use | No established objectives. | Determine management objectives for visitor use. | Same as B. | Same as B. |
| Recreational facilities | Limited to Tangle Lakes campground, portage, and take-out. | Develop more pit toilets. Delta wayside upgrade. Consider acquisition of Lodge for education/visitor center, campground renovation, develop take-out w/outhouse, signage. | Maintain existing facilities. | Delta wayside upgrade. Consider acquisition of Lodge for education/visitor center. Tangle Lakes campground renovation. Sign take-out better. |
| Lands and Realty: Emphasis area for acquisition? | No | No | Yes | Yes. |

ALTERNATIVES – Delta River SRMA

| Management Actions | Alternative A: Current management | Alternative B: Development end of spectrum | Alternative C: Conserve/maintain end of spectrum | Alternative D |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| Lands and Realty: FLPMA, R&PP leases | Yes, case-by-case. | Same as A. | No. | Avoid. |
| Lands and Realty: FLPMA 302 permits | Yes, case-by-case. | Yes, case-by-case. | No. | No for occupancy type permits. Non-occupancy considered if consistent with objectives identified for this SRMA. |
| Lands and Realty: Rights of Way (ROW) | Utility corridor an existing land use allocation. Allow with protection of scenic and other values. | Allow, case by case. | No in corridor and in viewshed. | Avoid in corridor. |
| Military permits, activities | Considered case-by-case. | Same as A. | No. | No. |
| Forestry | 1983 Plan allows personal use firewood gathering. | Same as A. | No forestry practices or firewood permits allowed in corridor or viewshed. | No commercial forestry or firewood sales. Personal firewood allowed under permit. |
| Visual Resources | Managed as Class I | Manage as Class II. | Manage within corridor and viewshed as Class I. | Manage as Class I. Viewshed on BLM-managed lands outside SRMA will be managed as Class II. Activities within the viewshed should be designed to protect the area's scenic quality, such as minimizing vegetation clearing, using landforms to screen structures and guide road alignment. |

ALTERNATIVES – Delta River SRMA

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|---------------------------|--|---|---|----------------------|
| Fire | Currently managed under limited suppression class. | Same as A. | Use fuels treatment projects and wildland fire to achieve resource objectives, protect human life and property and to reduce risk and costs of unwanted wildland fires. | Same as C. |