

**STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF MINING, LAND AND WATER**

**Southcentral Regional Land Office**

Memorandum of Decision

**PRJ 234832**

Slipper Lake Public Use Site

Administrative Decision to Temporarily Close

AS 38.05.035(a)(7)

**Background**

Typically, each spring the community of Sutton and the various user groups of the Jonesville Public Use Area come together to conduct a large community cleanup, removing refuse, abandoned vehicles, and other debris from the area. Hundreds of volunteers participate in collecting trash and placing it in dumpsters staged around Slipper Lake for disposal. Because this annual event brings a high concentration of people into a specific area, it is necessary to temporarily close the immediate vicinity to the incompatible activity of the discharging of weapons for the duration of the cleanup.

**Statutory Authority**

This Administrative decision is being adjudicated under Alaska Statute AS 38.05.035(a)(7), which gives the DMLW jurisdiction over state land and gives the director the powers and, with the approval of the commissioner, the duties necessary to protect the State's rights and interest in state land, including the taking of all necessary action to protect and enforce the State's contractual or other property rights.

**Scope**

The scope of this decision is limited to determining if it is appropriate for the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to temporarily close a portion of the Slipper Lake Public Use Site to the discharge of weapons.

**Term**

The closure will begin at 9am and end at 4pm on Saturday May 16, 2026.

**Administrative Record**

The administrative record for this proposed action consists of the Constitution of the State of Alaska, the Alaska Land Act as amended, applicable statutes and regulations referenced here-in, the 2011 Susitna Matanuska Area Plan, Matanuska Valley Moose Range and Jonesville Public Use Area Management Plan (2024) and this decision.

**Geographic Location**

The Slipper Lake Public Use Site is located approximately 2.3 miles down Jonesville Mine Road.

## **Legal Description**

Seward Meridian, Township 19 North, Range 3 East, Sections 9, 16, and 21 consisting of 3,876 acres, more or less.

## **Other Land Information**

Municipality: Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB)

Regional Corporation: Cook Inlet Region Incorporated

## **Title**

The lands have previously been determined to be state-owned in the 2024 Adoption of the Matanuska Valley Moose Range and Jonesville Public Use Area Management Plan. The State of Alaska acquired title as follows:

Patent Number 1234058 serialized SCH 62

Patent Number 1235336 serialized as MH 124

Patent Number 1231095 serialized as GS 2

## **Planning & Classification**

The proposed restriction is located within a portion of the Slipper Lake Public Use Site, under the 2011 Susitna Matanuska Area Plan (SMAP) and the 2024 Matanuska Valley Moose Range and Jonesville Public Use Area Management Plan.

Under the Matanuska Valley Moose Range and Jonesville Public Use Area Management Plan, the proposed restriction area falls under Unit J3 within Jonesville Subunit. The area is classified as Coal Land and Public Recreation Land. The proposed action would not be inconsistent with this classification. The primary management intent for this unit is to “manage high levels of outdoor public recreational use and mitigate the conflicts between incompatible uses.” Therefore, the proposed restriction is consistent with this management intent.

## **Public and Agency Notice**

Public and Agency Notice of the proposed action was conducted from April 8, 2026 to May 8, 2026. The notice was posted to the State of Alaska Online Public Notice System and emailed to the Cook Inlet Region Incorporated, Chickaloon Moose Creek Native Association, the Alaska Department of Fish & Game, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and the Sutton Community Council. Notices were mailed on April 8, 2026, to the Chickaloon and Sutton post offices and were mailed or emailed to neighboring property owners and other interested parties.

## **Public and Agency Notice Comment & Response:**

A total of five comments were received during the notice period. All were in support of the temporary closure, and some of these commentors offered additional comments that are addressed below:

Comment: The official hours of the cleanup are 10am to 4pm.

DMLW Response: Thank you for clarifying the time and the temporary closure timeframe has been expanded to end at 4pm. However, to allow adequate time for setup and to clear any members of the public who may already be discharging weapons in the designated closure area, the closure start time will remain at 9:00 a.m.

Comment: Expand the closure area to encompass a common shooting area so that the area can also be cleaned safely.

DMLW Response: This area is now included in the temporary closure area as this is an area that is typically part of the cleanup efforts and may have users discharging weapons.

Comment: Shooting at the gravel pit, that is now closed to shooting, has not stopped.

DMLW Response: Thank you for the comment, however the scope of this decision is limited to the temporary closure to the discharge of weapons within the identified area.

Comment: Toxins from shooting activities are infiltrating the water.

DMLW Response: Thank you for the comment, however the scope of this decision is limited to the temporary closure to the discharge of weapons within the identified area.

Comment: Shooters will move to a location outside the temporary closure area.

DMLW Response: The discharge of firearms is authorized on State-owned land unless expressly prohibited by statute, regulation, or order. Individuals are solely responsible for ensuring compliance with all applicable safety requirements and operational protocols when discharging firearms.

Comment: Compromised safety of the visiting public and residents due to careless discharge of weapons.

DMLW Response: Thank you for the comment, however the scope of this decision is limited to the temporary closure to the discharge of weapons within the identified area. A separate opportunity will be available to submit these concerns when the regulations for the Jonesville Public Use Area are released to the public for comment.

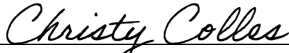
## Discussion

DMLW has received consistent public comments expressing concerns regarding public safety associated with the use and discharge of weapons in this area and has determined that such activities are incompatible with other authorized land uses at this location. To address these concerns during scheduled cleanup efforts, the Southcentral Regional Land Office will temporarily restrict the discharge of weapons within a portion of the Slipper Lake Public Use Site, as shown on the attached map. This temporary closure would ensure the safe participation of the public in the annual cleanup event.

## Decision

To minimize conflicts of use and improve public safety, the Director has decided to temporarily restrict the discharge of weapons within a portion of the Slipper Lake Public Use Site for the duration detailed above. After reviewing the administrative record, the Matanuska Valley Moose Range and Jonesville Public Use Area Management Plan (2024) and other relevant information, I find this decision to temporarily restrict the discharge of weapons, consistent with the authority granted to me as the Director of the Division of Mining, Land and Water.

It is the decision of this office to take the action as recommended above. This decision takes effect immediately. If no appeal is filed by the appeal deadline, this decision becomes a final administrative order and decision of the department.

  
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Christy Colles  
Director  
Division of Mining, Land and Water

5/11/2026  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Attachments

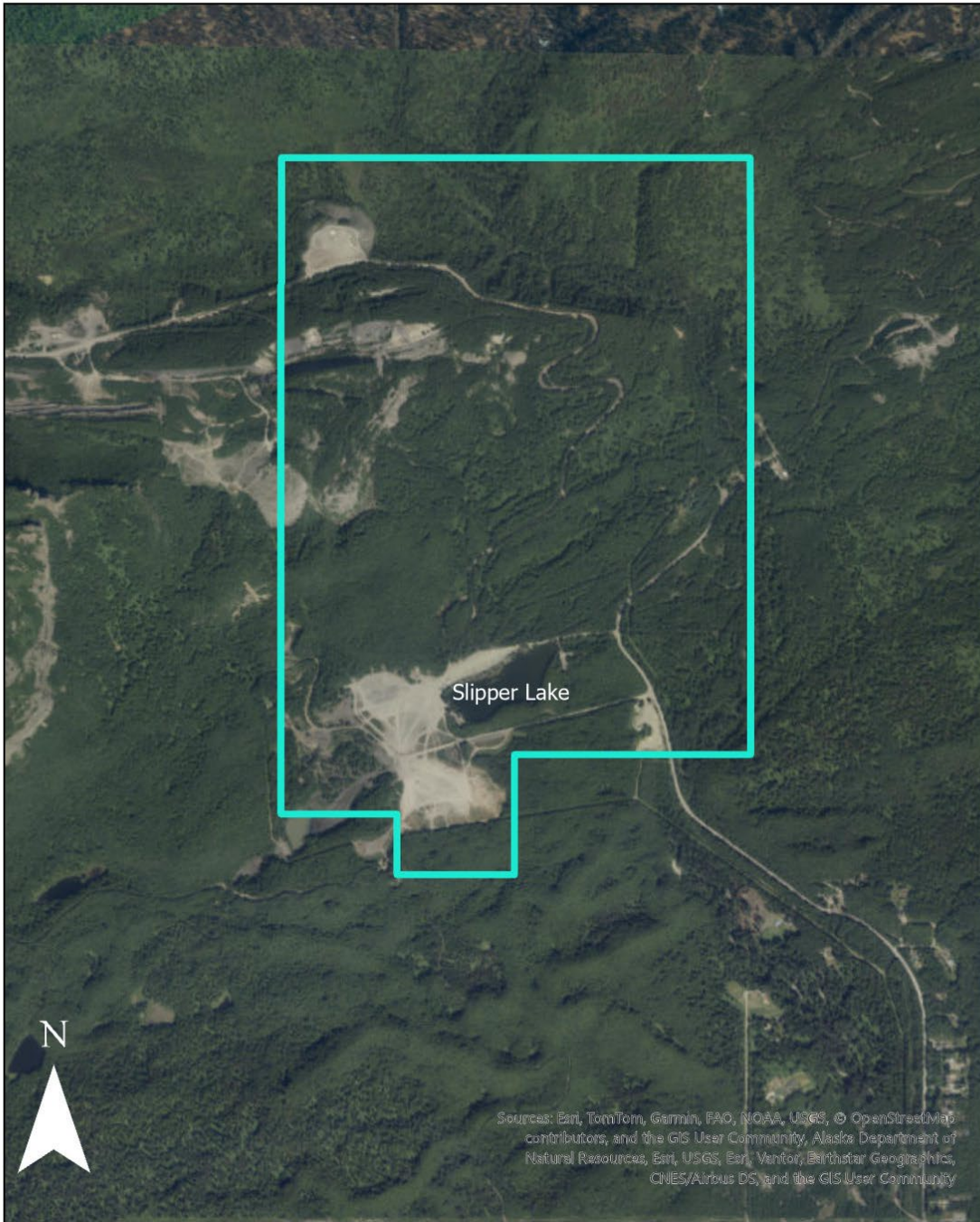
Map of Restricted Area

## Appeal

An eligible person affected by this decision may appeal to the DNR Commissioner per AS 44.37.011 and 11 AAC 02. Any appeal must be received within twenty (20) calendar days after issuance of this decision under 11 AAC 02.040. An eligible person must first appeal a decision to the Commissioner before seeking relief in superior court. The Alaska Court System establishes its own rules for timely appealing final administrative orders and decisions of the department.

Appeals may be mailed or hand-delivered to the DNR Commissioner's Office, 550 W. 7th Avenue, Suite 1400, Anchorage, Alaska, 99501; or faxed to (907)-269-8918; or sent by electronic mail to [dnr.appeals@alaska.gov](mailto:dnr.appeals@alaska.gov). Appeals must be accompanied by the fee established in 11 AAC

05.160(d)(1)(F), which has been set at \$200 under the provisions of 11 AAC 05.160 (a)-(b). A copy of 11 AAC 02 is available on the department's website at <https://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/pdf/DNR-11-AAC-02.pdf>.



**Temporary Closure Area to the Discharge of Weapons  
Saturday May 16, 2026 from 9am to 4pm**