

# **SUNBEAM AND SUNCREST LAKES**

## **LAKE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**Public Review Draft  
November, 2007**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1.0 INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 PURPOSE.....	1
1.2 SCOPE.....	1
1.3 PROCESS.....	2
1.4 ENFORCEABLE CODE RESTRICTION .....	3
<b>2.0 INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS .....</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1 LOCATION .....	3
2.2 PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LAKES.....	5
2.3 LAND USE AND LAND OWNERSHIP .....	6
2.4 SOCIAL/DEMOGRAPHIC – USAGE .....	8
2.5 EXISTING PLANS AND LAKE MONITORING PROGRAMS.....	8
2.6 EXISTING REGULATIONS .....	9
<b>3.0 ISSUES AND CONCERNS .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>4.0 GOALS .....</b>	<b>14</b>
4.1 WATER QUALITY AND WILDLIFE PROTECTION .....	14
4.2 PRESERVATION OF QUIET RECREATIONAL AND RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER .....	15
4.3 MAINTENANCE OF ACCESS .....	15
4.4 EDUCATE RESIDENTS AND VISITORS .....	15
<b>5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>15</b>
5.1 MAINTAIN WATER QUALITY AND PROTECT WILDLIFE .....	15
5.2 PRESERVE QUIET RECREATIONAL AND RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER .....	15
5.3 MAINTAIN CURRENT ACCESS .....	16
5.4 EDUCATE RESIDENTS AND VISITORS .....	16
<b>6.0 IMPLEMENTATION .....</b>	<b>16</b>

## FIGURES

- FIGURE 1 VICINITY MAP
- FIGURE 2 LAND USE & OWNERSHIP
- FIGURE 3 GENERAL SETBACK REQUIREMENTS AND LOT SIZE REQUIREMENTS

## APPENDICES

- APPENDIX A: NANCY LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA MAPS
- APPENDIX B: VEHICLE MOVEMENT ON FROZEN WATER SURFACES WITHIN SOUTH CENTRAL ALASKA
- APPENDIX C: VOLUNTARY BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR DEVELOPMENT AROUND WATERBODIES

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose

This lake management plan presents goals and objectives to balance the physical and social demands of those that live or recreate on Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes with the need to maintain a healthy and productive lake ecosystem. The lake management plan process was established by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough to provide a means to reduce user conflicts, balance various environmental and recreational demands placed upon a lake, and protect the health, safety and welfare of its residents and lake users.

## 1.2 Scope

Lake management plans provide guidance for how the surface of the lake is used and makes recommendations concerning public access and education of lake users to meet the goals of the plan. Certain aspects of the plan can be implemented as enforceable regulations through MSB Title 17.59. The borough assembly adopted guidelines for appropriate regulations for different sizes of lakes as follows:

### LAKES HAVING A SURFACE OF 75 ACRES OR LESS

May recommend the following guidelines:

- ✓ No wake zone - 100 feet from shoreline
- ✓ Quiet hours - 10 p.m. to 8 a.m.
- ✓ Personal watercraft restriction
- ✓ 10 horse power limit\*
- ✓ No wake speed zone on lake\*

\* These options *may* be recommended on a daily time share basis.

### LAKES MORE THAN 75 SURFACE ACRES TO 200 SURFACE ACRES

May recommend the following guidelines:

- ✓ No wake zone - 100 feet from shoreline
- ✓ Quiet hours - 10 p.m. to 8 a.m.
- ✓ Personal watercraft restriction
- ✓ 10 horse power limit\*\*
- ✓ No wake speed zone on lake\*\*

\*\*These options *must* be on a daily time share basis.

### LAKES MORE THAN 200 SURFACE ACRES

May recommend the following options:

- ✓ No wake zone - 150 feet from shoreline
- ✓ Quiet hours - 11 p.m. to 8 a.m.

## FOR ALL LAKES

- ✓ Access recommendations will be consistent with traditional use and current level of access development.
- ✓ Quiet hours apply to repetitive recreational activities such as water skiing and racing or high speed activities NOT to moderate speed point to point transportation.
- ✓ No wake is defined as the slowest speed a boat or personal water craft can go and still maintain safe operation and maneuverability.
- ✓ Time share means restrictions do not apply on Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and all three day weekends mandated by federal holiday (Memorial Day, Fourth of July, and Labor Day).
- ✓ Ice house means a structure utilized for ice fishing and left on the frozen surface of a lake for more than 24 hours.
- ✓ Motor vehicles means automotive vehicles with rubber tires for use on highways.
- ✓ Motorized watercraft use means the operation of watercraft powered or propelled by a force other than human muscle power, gravity, or wind. This definition does not include airplanes as motorized watercraft when landing, taking off, or taxiing on a water body.
- ✓ Personal watercraft includes vehicles such as jet skis, wave runners, and similar acrobatic or stunt equipment.
- ✓ A wake is the track in the water left after the passage of watercraft or other vehicle.
- ✓ A special permit is a permit approved by the planning director for a special purpose and is limited to a specific time to conduct an event that would otherwise involve activities in violation of MSB 17.59.

These guidelines may be varied due to lake configuration, lake depth, or other considerations through the adoption of individual lake management plans.

Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes are about 21 and 40 surface acres in size respectively, and therefore, fall within the guidelines for lakes less than 75 surface acres.

### 1.3 Process

Lake management plans are initiated by local residents or property owners. The initiators circulate a petition to get the required number of signatures on the petition required by code.

Once a valid petition has been filed with the department, a ballot is mailed to all property owners within 600 upland feet of the affected lake. This ballot serves as notice of the receipt of a valid petition and requests a vote to begin the lake

management process. The borough begins a lake management plan if the majority of property owners responding to the mailed ballot vote in favor of developing a lake management plan.

Borough planning staff gather background information on the lake and encourage adjacent property owners and users to participate in the planning process. Borough staff, lake users, lake residents, and property owners identify issues and concerns and establish goals and objectives that are incorporated into the draft plan.

The draft plan is reviewed by the public and community council and by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning Commission. The planning commission considers all oral and written comments received in a public hearing and either recommends to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly adoption of the plan as is, or with modifications, or recommends assembly disapproval of the plan. The assembly either adopts the plan as is or with modifications, or votes down the plan.

#### 1.4 Enforceable Code Restriction

The lake management plan meeting was held on October 23, 2007 with five people signing the attendance sheet. Most of those lake property owners, residents and lake users in attendance expressed a preference for enforceable restrictions on:

- No wake zone – 100 feet from the shoreline
- Quiet hours – 10 p.m. to 8 a.m.
- 10-horsepower limitation on Suncrest Lake
- Electric motors only restriction on Sunbeam Lake
- Personal watercraft restriction

These restrictions will protect the quiet enjoyment of the properties and allow continued use of the lakes by residents and visitors in keeping with traditional practices. The plan will also help future lake users to boat or recreate in a manner that protects the rural residential character of the lakes.

## **2. Inventory of Existing Conditions**

### 2.1 Location

Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes are located in the Willow Community Council area. The lakes lie about 4 miles west of the Parks Highway around milepost 58 (See Figure 1). The southern end of Suncrest Lake is within the Nancy Lake State Recreation Area. There is no developed public access to either lake.

**Figure 1 Vicinity Map**

## 2.2 Physical Characteristics of the Lakes

The surrounding topography of Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes is relatively flat, with most properties gaining about 3-4 feet of elevation from the lake surfaces. Much of the shore line is in its natural condition. A hill separates the two lakes, although there is a deep enough depression that allows a small connecting stream about mid-way along the western shore of Suncrest Lake.

Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes are long narrow lakes that trend north-south. Sunbeam Lake is about 2,500 feet long and averages 300 feet in width. Suncrest Lake is about 3,500 feet long and averages 550 feet in width. Both lakes are shallow near shore with depths from two to six feet. Sunbeam may be 10 to 15 feet deep in the wider portions of the lake. Suncrest may be up to 30 feet deep in the wide southern lobe of the lake.

According to local residents, Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes are primarily spring fed. Sunbeam Lake is connected via a small inlet stream to a nearby pond to the north. Suncrest Lake is connected by a small inlet stream to North Rolly Lake and Rhein Lake to the south (See Appendix A).

Wetlands bound the northern and southern portions of the two lakes. The eastern and western shores of both lakes are dominated by uplands including birch, spruce and alder with underlying mosses, berries and other shrubs.

Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes are not currently stocked by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). Water quality problems have not been reported.

Table 1: Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes Physical Characteristics

Surface Acres	Sunbeam: 21.3 Suncrest: 40.1
Volume	Unknown
Maximum Depth	Sunbeam: 15 feet Suncrest: 30 feet
Mean Depth	4-8 feet
Average width	Sunbeam: 300 feet Suncrest: 550 feet
Approximate length	Sunbeam; 2,500 feet Suncrest: 3,500 feet

Source: MSB GIS Information, and local knowledge

### 2.3 Land Ownership and Land Use

Land around the lakes is comprised predominately of large lots with very few houses. Two subdivisions exist around the lakes (See Figure 2).

#### **Sunbeam Lake**

The Douglas Lake subdivision lies on the western shore of Sunbeam Lake and has not been developed. There are no houses constructed. The lots are accessed via the lake and have no overland trails or roads. The subdivision is advertised as floatplane access only. There has been no recent floatplane use of Sunbeam Lake, according to those who attended the meeting. The borough has copies of recorded covenants for Douglas Lake Subdivision.

#### **Suncrest Lake**

There is a proposed subdivision of the parcel located on the northeastern shore of Suncrest Lake. This plat has not yet been recorded. This subdivision will have a total of seven lots.

The property around the lakes is almost entirely in private ownership. However, the southern tip of Suncrest Lake extends into the Nancy Lake State Recreation Area. The recreation area is state land and borders the parcels along the southern shores of both lakes and the parcels along the western shore of Sunbeam Lake (See Appendix A). There is a small public dock on the southwestern tip of Suncrest Lake that is part of the state recreation area canoe portage trail system that continues to an unnamed lake along a section line easement to the west. The section line easement trail traces the boundary between the recreation area and the private land bordering Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes.

Rainbow Lake, a much larger lake to the northeast, has been extensively subdivided and includes a developed access point. Rainbow Lake was reported to support heavy motorized use.



**Figure 2 Land Use & Ownership**

#### 2.4 Social/Demographic – Usage

The present human use of Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes may be characterized as being primarily quiet and residential. The lots are large, and the potential for increased residential density and lake usage is of concern to property owners and residents. The lake management plan was initiated by lake property owners and residents as a result of the desire to protect the quiet residential atmosphere of the lakes, and ensure protection of water quality and nesting birds. The borough files contain copies of recorded covenants, designating residential/recreational development for Douglas Lake Subdivision. In order to effectively manage lake usage and protect water quality, future residential plans need to be identified.

If subdivision requests are made and finalized, this lake management plan could provide the guidance necessary to ensure the increased lake usage occurs in a manner that protects the lakes and the quality of life that current users enjoy. One recent subdivision request was finalized (eastern shore of Suncrest Lake), and approved. Douglas Lake Subdivision (western shore of Sunbeam Lake) is the only subdivision that has been recorded.

Neither lake is designated as a “Private Seaplane Base” by the FAA. According to those who attended the meeting, there are no small planes on the lakes and no commercial aircraft operations.

There is a primitive trail along the section line easement between sections 36 and 1 along the border of the Nancy Lake State Recreation Area. Residents and property owners did not feel that additional public access points were required. The subdivision on the eastern shore of Suncrest Lake will reportedly have a private access easement for property owners that will be walk-in only.

The lakes are not stocked by the ADF&G. It is not anticipated that public interest to use the lakes will increase, as there are other more readily accessible and larger lakes in the vicinity.

Lake residents, property owners, and users enjoy the quiet, natural aspects of the lakes and are interested in protecting the water quality.

#### 2.5 Existing Plans and Lake Monitoring Programs

##### State

The state plan affecting the Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes area is the Willow Sub-Basin Area Plan. The Willow Sub-Basin Area Plan, adopted in October 1982, contains management intent for state and borough lands within the Willow Sub-Basin, an area of approximately 970,000 acres. Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes are within the Willow Management Unit, which recommends the following uses on public lands:

- Community land needs for the city of Willow
- Parks Highway Scenic Area

### Matanuska-Susitna Borough

Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) plans that address Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes in some manner include the borough-wide 2005 comprehensive plan update and the Coastal Management Plan.

The MSB Comprehensive Plan provides a broad set of goals and policies for natural resources, but the plan does not make an explicit reference to Sunbeam Lake or Suncrest Lake. The plan recommends that borough land use policies should, “Protect and enhance the borough’s natural resources including watershed, groundwater supplies and air quality” (Goal LU-4, page 10). To accomplish this goal, a policy was established in the comprehensive plan which supports identifying, monitoring, protecting, and enhancing the quantity and quality of the borough’s watersheds, groundwater aquifers, and clean air resources. The waters of Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes are publicly owned.

Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes are within the boundaries of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Coastal District (District), as defined within the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Coastal Management Plan. The coastal management plan seeks to direct the course of local, state or federal development within the District in a manner that protects the important land and water resources of the District. The adopted policies of the plan are used to evaluate development proposals vis-à-vis resource values in an effort to ensure that the proposals are consistent with the plan’s goals and objectives. Local development includes actions that trigger a borough subdivision, planning or zoning action. For example, a variance application to build a habitable structure or garage closer than 75 feet from the ordinary high water mark of Sunbeam Lake or Suncrest Lake would be reviewed to determine whether or not it is consistent with the Coastal Management Plan. Construction within waterbodies is also reviewed for consistency with the plan. Uncovered floating or pile supported docks which do not extend more than 40 feet beyond the ordinary high water line and do not exceed 400 square feet in size may obtain a general concurrence. Metal drums, however, may not be used as flotation devices.

### Lake Monitoring Program

The borough coordinates a lake monitoring program to monitor water quality, identify problems that degrade water quality, monitor the biological and hydraulic functions of the lake, and establish baseline trends to assist planning. The program depends on local volunteers to gather information and take samples for further testing. In addition, lake monitors identify fish and wildlife habitat and report environmental impacts. No lake monitoring is scheduled. One property owner stated they would begin lake monitoring in spring 2008.

## 2.6 Existing Regulations

This section describes the principle regulations affecting use and development in the Sunbeam Lake and Suncrest Lake area.

### Federal

Any work which results in the dredging or placing of structures or fill in tidal (ocean) waters, streams, lakes or wetlands requires a 404 permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Migratory birds, which include loons and grebes, are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The Act, among other things, prohibits the “taking” of migratory birds. Destruction of nest sites, eggs, or the birds themselves are a violation of the act.

Operation of aircraft, both private and commercial, is regulated by the Federal Aviation Administration.

### State

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) provides regulations for wastewater disposal. ADEC wastewater/septic regulations [Title 18 Alaska Administrative Code 72.015(f)] state that no holding tank, septic tank, soil absorption system, seepage pit, privy, or other waste water collection, treatment, or disposal system may be within 100 feet, measured horizontally, of the mean annual high water level of a lake, stream, spring, slough, or the mean high water level of coastal waters.

In addition to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 404 permit requirements; any activity within streams and certain work within lakes specified as waters important for the spawning, rearing, or migration of anadromous fishes require a Title 41 permit from the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR), Office of Habitat Management and Permitting (OHMP). Since 1994, the Alaska Department of Fish & Game, Habitat and Restoration Division has issued a general permit, renewed annually, allowing vehicle movement on frozen water surfaces in south-central Alaska. ADNR, OHMP currently issues these permits (Appendix B). Nancy Lake is listed in the catalog of waters important for anadromous fishes. Neither Sunbeam nor Suncrest Lakes were listed in the catalog. However, Sunbeam Lake is connected to Suncrest Lake, which is connected to North Rolly Lake, which in turn is connected to the Little Susitna River. Although the connections are likely low-gradient slow moving streams, there is a potential that anadromous fish may migrate up the connections at some point in the future. Finally, the general ADF&G fishing regulations apply to Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes.

A navigable or public waterbody includes water suitable for public use and utility including boating, landing and take-off of aircraft, hunting, fishing, and trapping, or other public recreational purposes. Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes meet the definition of public waterbody.

Land that has been or is currently owned by the State of Alaska, and is adjacent to a navigable or public waterbody has special access requirements. Alaska Statute (AS 38.05.127) requires access to and along the surface waters of navigable and public waterways. An "along" easement, is generally reserved as a 50-foot wide public use

easement along the ordinary high-water mark. These easements are created when the state conveys land to a borough or a private individual and the easement stays with the property in perpetuity unless vacated through a public review process. State lands conveyed prior to the passage of AS 38.05.127 may not be subject to the "to" and "along" easements. A review of the conveyance document and in some cases, court documents is required to determine the presence or absence of these easements. Lands patented by the federal government are not usually subject to "to and along" easements.

Because the land around Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes was patented to private ownership, there may not be "to" and "along" easements around Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes.

### Borough

Several borough-wide ordinances address the development and use of land adjacent to Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes. The regulations are contained within the borough's planning (Title 15), zoning (Title 17), real property management (Title 23), and subdivision (Title 27) ordinances.

*Title 15.* Title 15 establishes and describes the general functions of the planning commission (both planning and zoning functions) and the board of adjustment and appeals. Title 15 also describes the comprehensive plan and purposes. Once adopted, the Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes Management Plan will become an instrument of borough policy similar to the other plans adopted by the borough assembly.

*Title 17.* Zoning regulations that are of special note to development activities at Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes include setback requirements and a petition process to limit or eliminate motorized use of lakes and conditional use permits. Presently, all structures must be a minimum of twenty-five feet from the right-of-way and ten feet from side and rear lot lines. In addition, the voters of the borough approved, by initiative, a requirement that all habitable structures and garages must be located at least seventy-five feet from the ordinary high water mark of any waterbody or water course (Figure 3).

Also, all septic systems must be located 100 feet from the ordinary high water mark. The borough also requires that any development which seeks to establish or operate certain uses that may impact surrounding properties must first obtain a conditional use permit (MSB 17.60). Also, MSB 17.55.020 Setbacks for Shorelands, does not apply to structures where construction was completed prior to November 16, 1982.

*Title 27.* Title 27 provides the subdivision development standards within the borough and establishes the platting board. Some Title 27 requirements that are of special note to the development at Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes include minimum lot size of 40,000 square feet with at least 10,000 square feet of useable building area and 10,000 square feet of contiguous useable septic area. Lots having 20,000 square feet

or less of the total useable building area and useable septic area shall have 10,000 square feet of contiguous useable septic area surrounded by a well exclusion area extending 100 feet from the perimeter.

Lots containing at least 20,000 square feet but less than 40,000 square feet must be serviced by an approved community water or septic system. A community wastewater disposal system shall include a common wastewater disposal site on separate lot(s) that serves the entire subdivision. Lots may be approved that have less than 20,000 square feet but at least 8,400 square feet if served by a community or municipal water system or municipal sewage disposal facilities. For those areas not served by municipal sewer and water, lots less than 20,000 square feet must be approved as a Planned Unit Development as authorized by MSB 17.36.

Lots adjacent to a watercourse or body of water shall have a minimum of 125 feet of frontage as measured directly between property corners at the waterline, or a minimum of 85 feet as measured directly between property corners at the waterline if community sewerage is provided to the lot (Figure 3).

#### Private

Private regulations in the Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes area would be in the form of subdivision covenants. The borough files contain copies of recorded covenants for Douglas Lake Subdivision. For current information about covenants, the reader is referred to the State of Alaska Records Office. The Records Office can be found on the internet at <http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/ssd/recoff/search.cfm>.

**Figure 3 General Setback Requirements and Lot Size\*  
Requirements**

### **3. Issues and Concerns**

The issues and concerns identified by residents include:

- Maintaining and preserving the water quality of the lakes;
- Protection of wetlands, nesting waterfowl and wildlife habitat;
- Protection of the quiet rural residential nature of the lakes; and
- Potential future floatplane traffic.

A majority of those attending the meeting said that the quiet, rural residential character of the lakes should be protected. The present state of the lakes is characterized as rural residential development having a quiet quality. The historical use of Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes has not included high-powered motorized watercraft.

Subdivision of undeveloped land and homebuilding on vacant lots may also result in greater impacts of noise and wake degrading the shoreline and water quality, increasing the potential for damage to wildlife and/or waterfowl, and impacting the quiet residential quality of the lakes. Some property owners are concerned about winter snowmachine usage and the associated noise and trespass issues. While snow machines are a generally allowed use on all state land (including frozen waterbodies), the plan can make recommendations about winter trails leading to the lakes, posting public information, and enforcement of quiet hours.

Concern was expressed over potential future floatplane usage of the lakes. Property owners and residents wanted to ensure that reasonable hours of operation were conducted by floatplane operations on the lakes and that a significant increase in these activities did not occur. Additional aircraft noise and potential disturbance to the local and migrating waterfowl, and conflicts between lake users and taxiing floatplanes was a concern to the property owners and residents.

### **4.0 Goals**

Goals describe the future expectations of residents, property owners, and users of a lake. The following goals reflect the aspirations of Sunbeam Lake and Suncrest Lake residents, property owners, and users: quality of experience, recreational character of the area, wildlife habitat and water quality. The goals are not shown in priority order as they are interdependent.

#### **4.1 Water Quality and Wildlife Habitat Protection**

Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes are significant natural resources. It is the desire of property owners, residents, and users of Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes to maintain or improve the lake's water quality and to ensure that recreational uses of the lake are compatible with wildlife and habitat. Since the lakes are primarily spring fed, the property owners and residents want to ensure responsible use and good water quality.



4.2 Preservation of Quiet Recreational and Residential Character

It is the desire of property owners, residents, and users of Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes to preserve the quiet and peaceful rural residential character of the lakes, while allowing some low impact recreational uses for residents.

4.3 Maintenance of Public Access

There is a public access point to the southern shore of Suncrest Lake, which is available from the Nancy Lake State Recreation Area. There is no public access to Sunbeam Lake. Residents and property owners do not feel that the current public access point needs to be improved or that additional public access points are required. If a public or private access is developed as a result of a future subdivision, it is recommended that it be designated as walk-in only.

4.4 Educate Residents and Visitors

It is the desire of property owners and residents of Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes to utilize public education as a means by which to accomplish many of the other goals of the lake management plan, and to encourage responsible development on properties surrounding the lakes.

## 5.0 Recommendations

5.1 Maintain Water Quality and Protect Wildlife

Certain uses, such as high powered motorized watercraft and personal watercraft (a.k.a. jet skis), can create wake that contribute to shoreline erosion and disturb nesting waterfowl. Wake action may cause loon and grebe mortality by swamping nests or by separating parents from chicks. Noise caused by motors may also disturb waterfowl. Those in attendance at the meeting agreed that personal watercraft should be prohibited on Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes to minimize wake and manage noise. It was agreed that an electric motors restriction should be in place for Sunbeam Lake. Most of those in attendance at the meeting were in agreement with the recommendation of a 10 horsepower limit at all times on Suncrest Lake.

Maintaining natural shoreline vegetation is one of the best ways to protect water quality. Natural shoreline vegetation provides erosion control, filtering of surface runoff, and habitat for fish and wildlife. It is recommended that lakeshore property owners follow Matanuska-Susitna Borough “*Voluntary Best Management Practices for Development Around Waterbodies*” (Appendix B).

In order to determine baseline water quality conditions on Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes, volunteers are encouraged to participate in the borough’s Lake Monitoring Program.

5.2 Preserve Quiet Recreational and Residential Character

Residents and property owners of the area initiated the lake management planning process to protect the quiet recreational and residential use of the lakes. The majority

of those attending the meetings support limitations for watercraft motors as a means of reducing noise and promoting safety. It is recommended that a 10 horsepower limitation be established on Suncrest Lake. It is recommended that there be an electric motors only restriction on Sunbeam Lake.

The use of personal watercraft, a.k.a. jetskis, is not a traditional use of Sunbeam or Suncrest Lakes. It is incompatible with the quiet residential uses of the lakes. Furthermore, personal watercraft pose a safety hazard for swimmers and boaters. All property owners who attended the public meeting support a ban of personal watercraft. It is recommended that personal watercraft be prohibited on Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes.

The establishment of quiet hours, between 10 p.m. and 8 a.m., Sunday through Saturday, is recommended to maintain the existing quiet nature and residential quality of the lakes during all seasons.

#### 5.3 Maintain Current Access

There is currently a primitive trail that allows public access to Suncrest Lake via the Nancy Lake State Recreation Area canoe portage trail system. Those in attendance at the meeting recognize that a future subdivision could provide public or private access. It is recommended that if additional public or private access is identified, it be designated as walk-in only.

#### 5.4 Educate Residents and Visitors

It is recommended that the following methods be used to educate residents and visitors to Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes about use restrictions and best management practices:

- Mail or deliver notices to inform property owners and residents about code restrictions, and enclose information about non-code recommendations.
- Post lake restrictions along with any “Property for Sale” signs to inform potential buyers that lake restrictions are in place.
- Inform residents about the process for reporting violations to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Code Compliance Division.

## **6.0 Implementation**

Lake management plans are implemented through a combination of regulations, public information, and best management practices. MSB 17.59 Lake Management Plan Implementation, implements adopted lake management plans, using the borough’s citation authority. Specific recommendations of the lake management plans that are implemented through MSB 17.59 are: quiet hours, no wake zones, motorized water craft use, special permits, winter motor vehicles, and ice house registration. When the Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes Management Plan is adopted, MSB 17.59 will be amended to include the recommendations of the plan. Those

recommendations of the plan that are not included in MSB 17.59 will be implemented through public information and best management practices.

### **No Wake Zone – 100 feet from the Shoreline**

#### **Suncrest Lake**

To prevent shoreline erosion, reduce noise, and protect waterfowl, a no wake zone is established 100 feet from the shoreline. Motorized watercraft are restricted to a no wake zone at all times within 100-feet of the shoreline of Suncrest Lake.

### **Quiet Hours**

#### **Sunbeam Lake and Suncrest Lake**

To maintain the existing quiet nature, residential quality, and low impact use of the lakes, quiet hours are established between the hours of 10 p.m. and 8 a.m. Sunday through Saturday. Quiet hours apply to repetitive recreational activities such as water skiing and racing or high speed activities (both in winter and summer) and NOT to moderate speed point to point transportation.

### **Personal Watercraft Ban**

#### **Sunbeam Lake and Suncrest Lake**

To preserve the quiet residential and recreational uses of the lakes, prevent shoreline disturbance, and protect nesting waterfowl, personal watercraft are prohibited from Sunbeam and Suncrest Lakes. Personal watercraft includes vehicles such as jet skis, wave runners, and similar acrobatic or stunt equipment.

### **10-Horsepower Limitation**

#### **Suncrest Lake**

Nesting loons and grebes and other migratory waterfowl are at an increased risk of disturbance from wake caused by watercraft with large horsepower engines. Large wake also contributes to shoreline erosion. The lake's shallow depth is not conducive to high horsepower activities. The historic use of Suncrest Lake has been of a quiet, recreational nature, such as canoes. A 10-horsepower limitation is established for Suncrest Lake.

### **Electric Motors Only**

#### **Sunbeam Lake**

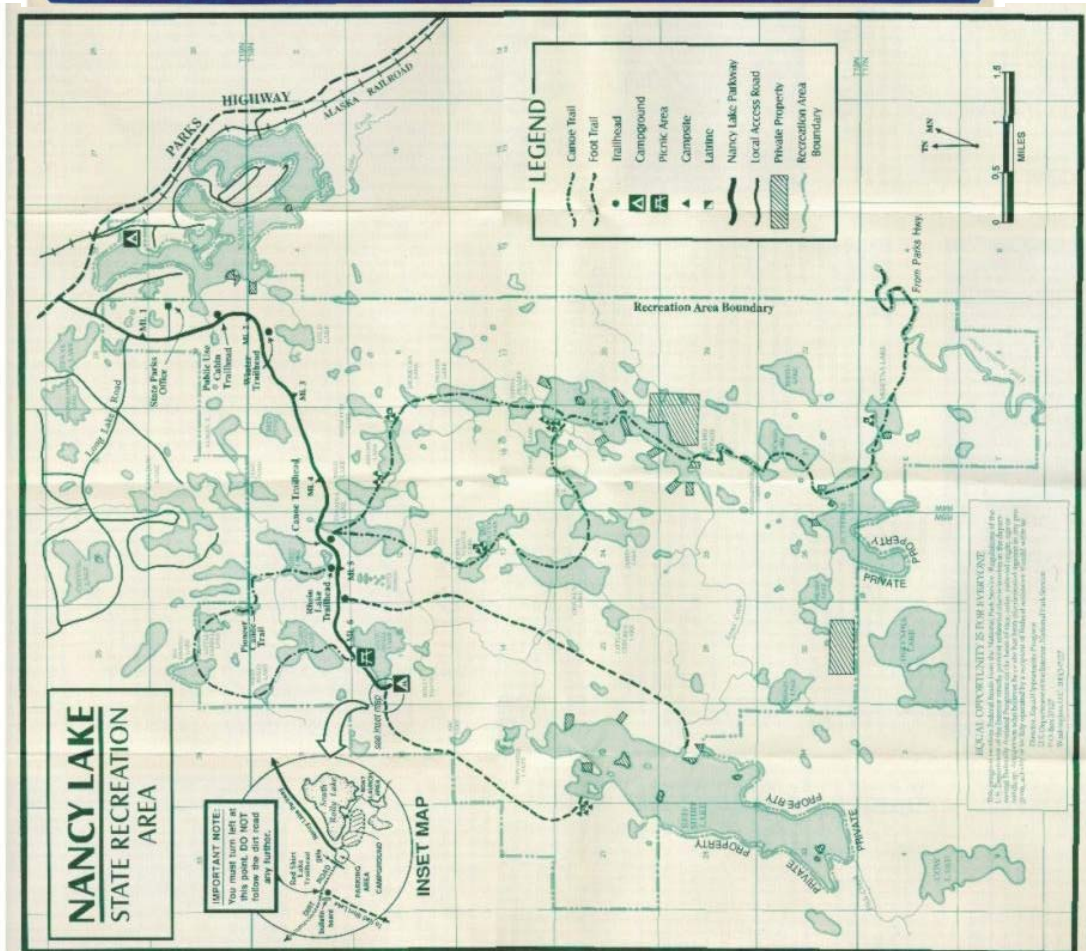
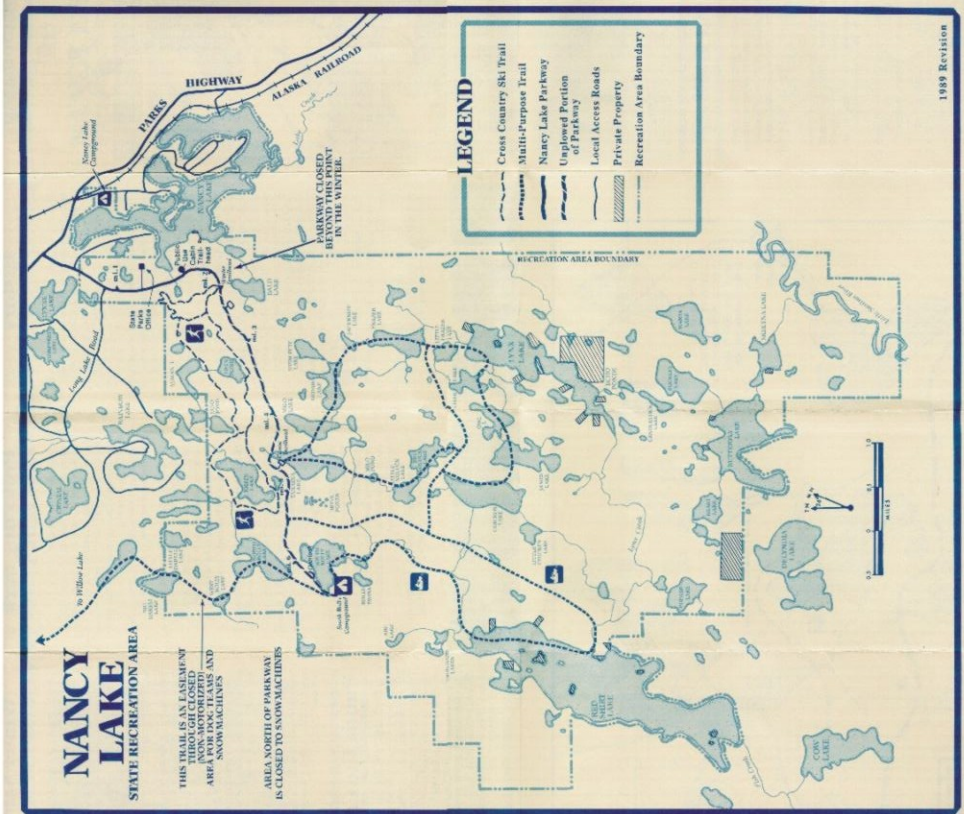
To preserve the quiet residential character of Sunbeam Lake and protect wildlife habitat, electric motors only are allowed for any motorized watercraft usage. The shallow, narrow nature of Sunbeam Lake makes it susceptible to shoreline damage by watercraft wake.

### **Maintain Current Limited Access**

#### **Sunbeam and Suncrest Lake**

There is currently limited public access to Suncrest Lake. Residents and property owners desire that no additional public access point be developed, however, if it is, it should be maintained as walk-in only. There is no public access to Sunbeam Lake and property owners desire that no additional public access point be developed, however, if it is, it should be maintained as walk-in only.

**Appendix A:  
Nancy Lake State Recreation Area Maps**



**Appendix B:  
Vehicle Movement On Frozen Water Surfaces  
Within South Central Alaska**

**Appendix C:  
Voluntary Best Management Practices for  
Development Around Waterbodies**