



## Fact Sheet: Petersville Recreational Mining Area

---

### Background

The state legislature designated a corridor of public land along Peters Creek, near Petersville Road (southwest of Denali State Park) for recreational mining and other general public recreation in 1997 (AS 41.23.630(b)) to give Alaskans and visitors a place where they can gain first-hand experience in recreational mining, help celebrate the Gold Rush Centennial, and potentially take home a few gold nuggets. To prevent conflicts between the public and mining claim owners, Petersville Recreational Mining Area is closed to staking of new mining claims.

### How do I get to the Petersville Recreational Mining Area?

The Petersville Recreational Mining Area is located along Peters Creek, within the Seward Meridian in Township 28N, Range 9W Section 1 and Township 28N, Range 8W Sections 6-8.

Access is provided to the Petersville Recreational Mining Area by Petersville Road. Petersville Road leaves the Parks Highway at Trapper Creek, about 115 miles north of Anchorage and 243 miles south of Fairbanks. Many areas along the road have outstanding viewpoints of Mount Denali. The first 9.4 miles are paved, and the next 8.9 miles goes to the site where the Forks Roadhouse once stood (which is the junction of Collinsville Rd. and Petersville Road.).

The Collinsville Road is only maintained to the Peters Creek bridge and becomes a four-wheeler trail soon after. Beyond this junction and for the next 14.9 miles Petersville becomes a primitive road all the way to the Recreational Mining Area. It is recommended that this next section be traveled using a four-wheel drive vehicle or a vehicle with high clearance.

Petersville Road is closed to thru traffic during the winter months. Additional access is provided to the area by the Willow Creek Trail (RST 512), which ultimately connects with the Youngstown-Home Lake Trail (RST 1608) and leads into Denali State Park. The bridge at Peters Creek (mile 32) has weight restrictions; oversize vehicles must use the ford to reach the upper end of the Recreational Mining Area. This ford and the second ford in the same area have been approved by the Alaska Department of Fish & Game as a vehicle crossing.

### What facilities are there now?

There are no developed campsites, sanitation facilities, drinking-water supplies, or trash cans at present. Visitors should be prepared for self-sufficient, low-impact camping.

### How will the Petersville Recreational Mining Area be developed?

State law requires the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to prepare a plan for the management, use, and development of the area, including the mining methods that can be used while still protecting important habitat such as for salmon in Peters Creek. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities will participate in the management plan, with full public input. In the meantime, the area is open to use.

### What kind of mining can I do?

Recreational gold panning, mineral prospecting, or mining using light portable field equipment, such as pick and shovel, pan, earth auger are allowed and do not require permitting. ADF&G does not authorize the use of backpack power drills or augers through their over-the-counter mining permits, therefore this type of equipment cannot be used. The use of mechanized equipment such as a suction dredge or a water pump requires a permit from ADF&G and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC). Suction dredges must have an intake line of six (6) inches or less, powered by a motor of 18HP or less and may not pump more than 30,000 gallons of water in a day. **Refer to the Fact Sheet for Generally Allowed Uses for information about the types of uses allowed on Alaska public land.**

### **How can I get a permit for suction dredging?**

Visit your local ADF&G, Division of Habitat office in Anchorage, Soldotna, Palmer, or Fairbanks. Permit application forms and contact information for ADF&G offices are available online at <http://www.habitat.adfg.alaska.gov>. Permits are free. Please call the ADF&G Division of Habitat Palmer office at 907-861-3200. Suction Dredging in the Petersville Recreational Mining Area is allowed May 15 through July 15; closing at midnight on July 15 to protect salmon habitat.

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation requires a General Permit for suction dredging activities. The application can be found on their website: <https://dec.alaska.gov/water/oasys/>. The fees vary according to projected suction dredging use.

**Note: Suction Dredges will only be authorized by ADF&G and ADEC if they are 6" or less and must be 18 hp or less. Power Sluicing (High-banking) will only be authorized if they are 18 hp or less.**

### **Are there any mining claims already in the area?**

There are no mining claims within the Petersville Recreational Mining Area, there are claims located outside the boundary. The Department of Natural Resources clearly marked the upstream and downstream ends of the area during the summer of 1997, and is looking for a way to show the side boundaries too.

In the meantime, you can avoid any conflict by doing your prospecting and mining only on the Peters Creek valley floor, not up Cottonwood Creek or on the higher ground where there are likely to be mining claims. Any minerals within the boundaries of these claims are the property of the claim owner. Please respect the mining locators' rights under the laws of the State of Alaska. Of course, you are free to walk across these mining claims or use them for camping, hunting, fishing, four-wheeling, and other recreation, but you may not mine on them without the claimant's permission.

### **What else can I do in the area?**

The Petersville Recreational Mining Area and surrounding public lands are highly popular for hunting, fishing, hiking, four-wheeling, snowmachining, cross-country skiing, and dog mushing.

### **Where can I get detailed maps?**

You can purchase topographical maps that show more detail on the area. Ask for USGS Topographical map Talkeetna C2. If you like, you can research status plats showing the location of existing mining claims weekdays between the hours of 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at a DNR Public Information Center (see below).

**For answers to questions not covered in the Fact Sheet please contact a Public Information Center:**

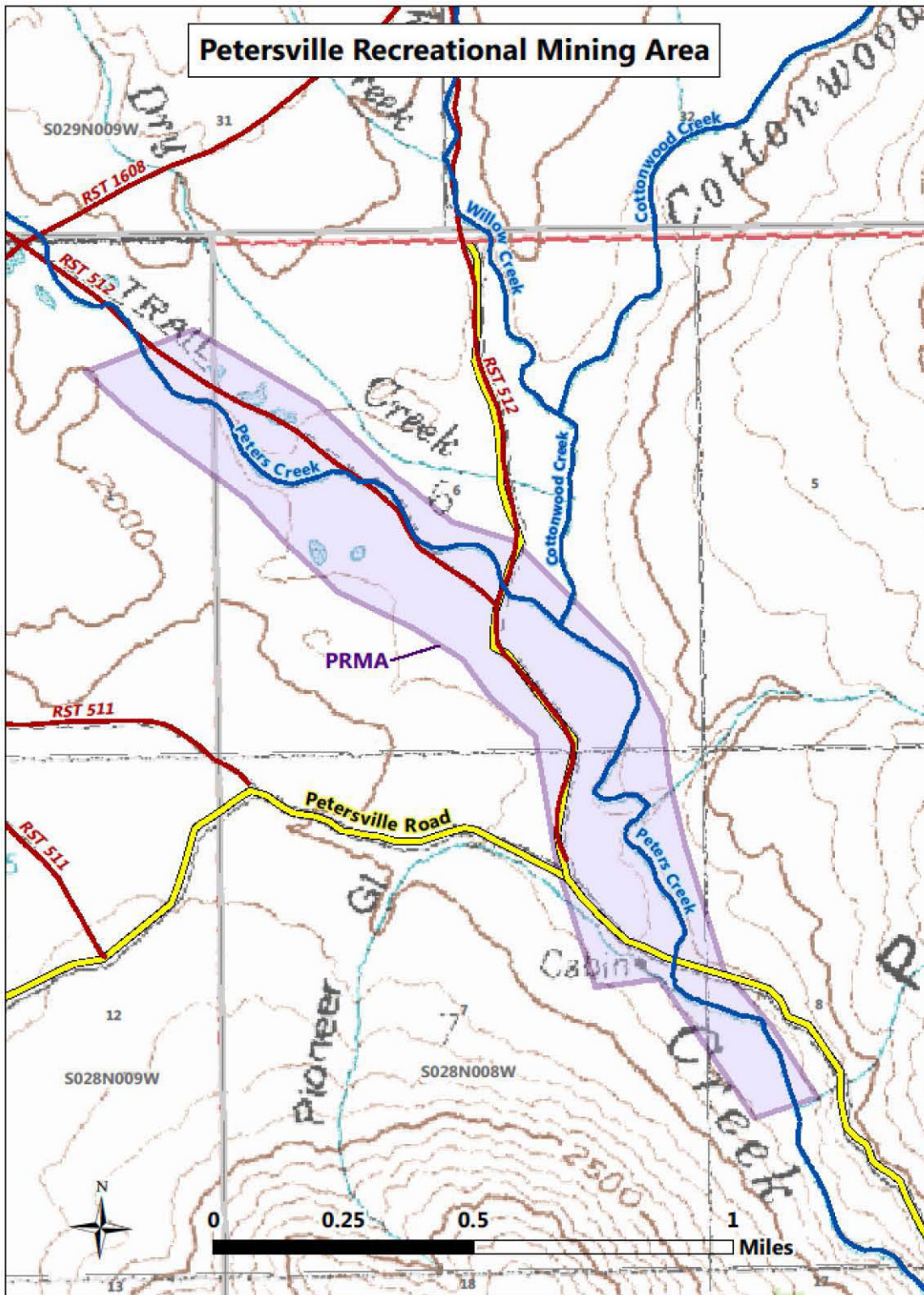
#### **Anchorage Public Information Center**

Department of Natural Resources  
Public Information Center  
550 West 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 1360  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-3561  
Monday thru Friday / 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM  
(907) 269-8400  
[dnr.pic@alaska.gov](mailto:dnr.pic@alaska.gov)

#### **Fairbanks Public Information Center**

Department of Natural Resources  
Public Information Center  
3700 Airport Way  
Fairbanks Alaska 99709-4699  
Monday thru Friday / 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM  
(907) 451-2705  
[fbx-pic@alaska.gov](mailto:fbx-pic@alaska.gov)

Statewide TTY – 711 for Alaska Relay or 1-800-770-8973



-  Petersville Recreational Mining Area (PRMA)
-  Anadromous Fish Stream
-  RS 2477 Trails
-  Roads
-  Section
-  Township

Scale: 1:12,000



Alaska  
 Department of Natural Resources  
 Division of Mining, Land & Water  
 Mining Section  
 Boundaries and Information  
 Current to May 2014

*This map is for graphic representation only  
 and is intended to be used only as a guide.  
 Coordinate System: NAAD\_1983\_UTM\_Zone\_6N*