

WORK PLAN SEGMENT REPORT
FEDERAL AID IN WILDLIFE RESTORATION

STATE:	Alaska	TITLE:	<u>Small Game, Waterfowl, & Furbearer Investigations</u>
PROJECT NO:		TITLE:	<u>Upland Game</u>
WORK PLAN:		TITLE:	<u>Inventory of Accessible Small Game Hunting Sites</u>
JOB NO:			

PERIOD COVERED: January 1, 1969 to December 31, 1969

ABSTRACT

Fifty-seven small game hunting sites were described during August and September 1969 in the Upper Cook Inlet region. There is considerable interest in small game hunting in this region, and Department personnel often receive inquiries concerning good locations. Spruce grouse are most commonly taken incidental to moose hunting, while ptarmigan are most sought after later in the season when they are at lower elevations and snow machines may be used. Including previous work, the Department now has descriptions of 103 small game hunting sites in the Kenai Peninsula-Upper Cook Inlet region. This report contains brief descriptions and plotted access routes for sites located in 1969.

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OBJECTIVES

To catalog known small game hunting sites in the Cook Inlet region, and to locate new sites in this region that would be accessible to hunters.

To organize the information so that it is available to the public.

TECHNIQUES

The locating of hunting sites was done early in the hunting season to get a true idea of conditions at that time of year. The following information was recorded for each site: location, terrain, vegetation, small game species available, season to hunt, road conditions during hunting season, parking facilities, trail length, best means of travel on trail, time required to walk in, suitability of area for camping, availability of cabins, distance to commercial accommodations, and miscellaneous recreational

opportunities (photography, fishing, berry picking, etc.). Note was made as to the presence of grouse, ptarmigan, and hares; no effort was made to designate some locations as better hunting sites than others. Whenever possible I visited with persons encountered in the field to determine how, when, and where most small game hunting is done in the area.

FINDINGS

Spruce grouse are found throughout the Upper Cook Inlet region (Matanuska Valley and Palmer-Talkeetna areas). Much of this region supports stands of small hardwoods with only scattered spruce, consequently spruce grouse densities are rather low. There are situations where spruce is the dominant vegetative cover, and grouse densities are locally comparable to those on the Kenai. It is my impression that fewer people hunt specifically for grouse in this region than on the Kenai, however, grouse hunting is an important secondary recreational pursuit of moose hunters. The region has many access routes into ptarmigan habitat, and in this respect, offers better ptarmigan hunting than the Kenai. However, most of this hunting occurs later in the season when the birds are at lower elevations and snow accumulations allow use of snow machines; considerable numbers of people go out specifically for ptarmigan in late winter and early spring. Year to year hare

densities seem to be more stable than in other parts of the state, and there are several areas offering good hunting in most years.

Each year our offices get numerous calls from hunters requesting where and how to hunt small game; many of these calls are from non-residents or short-term residents who are unfamiliar with the country and habits of small game. The public is interested in many types of information concerning game birds as evidenced by the rate at which printed material we have available on the subject is requested at our offices. It has not yet been decided in what form our hunting site data should be presented, but here is an excellent opportunity to point out the total experience concept of small game hunting. Aside from just giving site locations, habitats and habits of the various species, value and use of dogs in hunting, and other recreational opportunities available should be mentioned.

The possibility of overadvertising certain areas must be considered. I do not feel that under the present conditions game species would be depleted even if considerable increase in hunting pressure occurred at specific locations. Large expanses of inaccessible, unhunted land seem ample to replenish nearby areas that receive heavy pressure. The danger of overadvertising lies in producing an undesirable concentration of hunters at certain sites which would decrease the quality

of a hunt. The Department has been giving "where to hunt" information to the public for several years, but we now have information available on many more hunting sites than in the past. No matter in what form this information is presented to the public, the possibility of overadvertising specific areas is very remote.

Many of the described trails cross private land en route to hunting sites, and treatment of these areas in the public presentation is an important consideration. The right-of-way status on many of the sites is undecided, and some trails are illegally posted; all of these situations must be considered when deciding what form our public presentation should take. We should, by all means, promote the idea of respect for private property, and make sure hunters realize it is their responsibility to get permission from land owners before hunting on private land.

The remainder of this report contains brief descriptions of trails located in 1969 with locations plotted on maps. Figure 1 serves as a key to locate areas covered by more detailed 0.25-inch-to-the-mile maps (Figs. 2-6). Site numbers in the written descriptions correspond to numbered locations on Figures 2-6. The highway starting at Anchorage (Mile 0) and leading to Glennallen (Mile 187) is referred to as the Glen Highway. The mileages on the Palmer-Talkeetna

Highway (including the branch to Sunshine) indicate distances from Anchorage. Site descriptions indicate from which end of the Fishhook-Willow Creek Road mileages of sites along that road were taken. The initials SG, P, or H indicate the site as a spruce grouse, ptarmigan, or hare hunting area respectively.

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

Site No.

1. Ptarmigan Valley

Take first road to right past Spring Creek Lodge about 20 miles west of Anchorage on the Glen Highway. Travel only about 40 yards on this road and take left branch for about two miles, then turn 90⁰ to the right and travel 3 miles to Ptarmigan Valley. Foot trail starts at ski hut and leads about 0.75 mile across the tundra. Actually no trail is needed to get to nearby hill tops.

P. Fig. 2.

2. No Name

Eklutna Lake turn-off on Glen Highway (Mile 26.5) is well marked. About 9 miles to lake; 5.5 miles around north side of lake, trail (4-wheel drive

type) starts as road leading up slope to north and ending well above timber line.

P, SG. Fig. 2

3. Knik River Trail

Trail starts as road to east of old Glen Highway at mile 38.0. Starts as 2-wheel drive road, but becomes swamp buggy trail further along. It leads up Knik River to Hunter Creek about 8 miles away.

SG, H. Fig. 2

4. Jim Creek Trail

Starts as road to east at mile 40.6 old Glen Highway. Travel 0.5 miles, crossing Palmer Creek; after this stay left, and at mile 0.7 take middle fork. 3.3 miles from start the 2-wheel drive road stops at Jim Creek. Swamp buggy trail continues on for about 6.5 miles to Friday Creek.

SG, H. Fig. 2

5. Lazy Mountain Trail

Turn onto Clark-Wolverine Road at mile 45.9 old Glen. At 0.8 mile take right fork of T junction.

Travel on about 0.75 miles. Foot trail starts here and leads up to tundra in Lazy Mountain area.
Fig. 3

6. Wolverine Lake Horse Trail

Take Clark-Wolverine Road at Mile 45.9 old Glen. 0.8 miles in turn left at T junction. Follow road 7.3 miles to start of trail on south side of road. Exact route of trail was not determined. SG, possibly P. Fig. 3

7. Buffalo Mine Road

Take Buffalo Mine Road (Mile 52.7 Glen). Short swamp buggy trails starting at miles 2.2, 2.7, 3.1, 3.3, and 3.6. Trails vary from a few hundred yards to two miles in length, and lead to foothills of Arkose Ridge.
SG. Fig. 3.

8. Jonesville-Premier Mine Road

Take Buffalo Mine Road (Glen Mile 52.7). Travel 3.8 miles to where trail starts. Road (4-wheel drive type) continues 6.5 miles connecting Jonesville and Premier mines with a 1.5 mile

branch into Wishbone Lake, plus several other short, dead-end branches.

SG. Fig. 3

9. No Name

Turn north at Sutton on the Glen Highway. Travel 2.25 miles to Eska. Trail leads through coal mining area and then becomes a 4-wheel drive type road for another mile.

P. Fig. 3

10. No Name

Trail starts about 0.6 miles west of Granit Creek Bridge on Glen Highway. This swamp buggy trail leads about 3 miles to north. Observed from air only and should be checked further.

SG. Fig. 3

11. No Name

At 63.1 Glen Highway turn north, and travel about 0.8 miles taking right fork at the only branch. There the road becomes a 4-wheel drive type and winds through the area for 7 miles. This is an old fire road.

SG. Fig. 4

12. No Name

At mile 65.9 Glen Highway this trail leads to the north along west side of Kings River. 2-wheel drive road back about 1.8 miles; after that track vehicle. Exact length or route not determined.

SG. Fig. 4

13. Kings River Trail

At mile 71.8 Glen Highway leads to north for about 5 miles to Castle Mountain. After that, 15+ miles up Kings River as a horse trail.

SG, P further in. Fig. 4

14. Drill Lake, Castle Mountain Complex

At mile 77.6 Glen Highway a 2-wheel drive road takes off to the north crossing Chickaloon River two times. About one mile in take left fork and travel 2.5 miles. At this point left fork leads about 3 miles up California Creek to a mine in sub-alpine country. Right fork leads about 3 miles past Drill Lake to Fish Lake. Between the two lakes a horse trail leads off to the north for about 2 miles where it intersects Kings River Trail.

SG. Fig. 4

15. Chickaloon River Trail

At mile 77.6 Glen Highway a 2-wheel drive road leads off to north crossing Chickaloon River two times. About one mile in take right branch and follow it 1.5 miles, after that trail becomes a foot or horse trail and leads 30 miles up Chickaloon River.

SG. Fig. 4

16. Bonnie Lake Area

At mile 83.2 a 2-wheel drive road leads to north into Bonnie Lake Campground 1.9 miles in. Trail leads from campground to lake about one mile to east. At 0.5 mile on Bonnie Lake Road power line cut allows foot access from Ravine Lake down valley to west.

SG. Fig. 4

17. Long Lake Trail

At mile 85.4 Glen Highway foot trail following powerline cuts to east for about 2.5 miles.

SG. Fig. 4

18. Wiener Lake Trail

At mile 87.8 Glen Highway foot trail leads off to north to unnamed lake about one mile away.

SG. Fig. 4

19. Puritan Creek Trail

At mile 89.0 Glen Highway this swamp buggy trail leads up Puritan Creek for about 2 miles, then turns northwest intersecting Boulder Creek Trail 4.5 miles further on.

SG. Fig. 4

20. No Name

At mile 91.6 Glen Highway old Road Commission road takes off leading east toward Bible Camp about three miles away, and then southeast intersecting Glen again near Hicks Creek crossing.

Good horse or foot trail, possibly track vehicle.

SG. Fig. 4

21. Muddy Creek Trail

At mile 94.6 Glen Highway this swamp buggy or horse trail leads to the south 1.5 miles to Matanuska River. Trail crosses river and goes on a short distance to Tatondan Lake. Crossing

river may be dangerous at times.

SG. Fig. 4

22. Hicks Creek Trail

At mile 99.2 Glen Highway trail takes off to north. After about 5 miles trail follows Hicks Creek 3 miles to Hicks Lake, and then on for 3 miles to the intersection with the Caribou Creek Trail. First half is swamp buggy trail; after that it is a foot or horse trail.

SG. first half. P second half. Fig. 5

23. Caribou Creek Trail

At mile 107 on the Glen Highway this foot trail leads up Caribou Creek for about 6 miles to its junction with Squaw Creek Trail, and continues on up Caribou Creek as a horse trail. At least the first 5 miles are marked by BLM, and there are plans for further marking.

SG, possibly P further in. Fig. 5

24. Jackass Canyon Trail

At mile 109.9 on the Glen Highway this horse trail leads about 0.5 miles to the Matanuska

River, crosses river, and leads for about another 0.75 miles up hillside to Rock Glacier Creek.

SG possibly P. H. Fig. 5

25. No Name

Between miles 111 and 112.4 Glen Highway there are three short roads leading off north to the lower portions of Sheep Mountain. Roads are less than 2 miles long.

SG, P, H. Fig. 5

26. East End Trail

At mile 114.9 Glen Highway this trail leads about 1.5 miles to south. This is a track vehicle trail with many short side branches.

SG. Fig. 5

27. Camp Creek Trail

At mile 117.3 this horse trail leads off to south. It leads down Camp Creek for one mile.

SG. Possibly P. Fig. 5

28. Meekins Trail

This 4-wheel trail departs Glen Highway to north at mile 117.5, and leads one mile to its junction with Squaw Creek Trail.

P and possibly SG. Fig. 5

29. Knik-Valdez Mail Trail

At mile 118.3 Glen Highway a road to White Alice site departs to the southeast. About 1.5 miles on this road a swamp buggy trail takes off to east paralleling the east fork of the Matanuska River past Goober Lake to its junction with Eureka Creek Trail. Total length of trail is about 8 miles.

P. Fig. 5

30. Knob Lake Trail

White Alice Road departs Glen Highway to southeast at mile 118.3 Glen. About 2.5 miles in on this road a foot or snowmachine trail departs to the west and circles large flat west of Knob Lake at southwest end of Eureka Flats.

P. Fig. 5

31. Squaw Creek Trail

This horse trail departs Glen Highway (118.4 Glen) and continues north and then west for

9 miles to its junction with Caribou Creek Trail.

P. in winter. Fig. 5

32. Tahneta Pass Trail

At mile 121.2 this track vehicle trail departs Glen Highway to west and leads 2.5 miles to its junction with Squaw Creek Trail.

P. Fig. 5

33. Balanger Pass Trail

At mile 123.3 Martin's Road departs Glen Highway.

At end of this road (1.5 miles in) Balanger Pass Trail leads northwest and then west for 5.5 miles to its junction with Alfred Creek Trail. This is a track vehicle trail.

P. Fig. 5

34. Start Up Lakes Trail

At mile 125.9 Glen Highway this track vehicle trail leads to the north around Start Up Lakes and then turns southwest crossing Martin's Road and ends at intersection with Squaw Creek Trail. Total length about 8 miles.

Possibly SG and P. Fig. 5

35. Eureka Creek Trail

At mile 126.4 Glen Highway this track vehicle trail departs Glen to south. It continues about 6.5 miles to the junction with Knik-Valdez Mail Trail.

P. Fig. 5

36. Crooked Creek Trail

From head waters of Start Up Creek, this track vehicle trail leads up Crooked Creek and on to Little Nelchina River. Total length 17 miles.

P. Fig. 5

37. Old Man Creek

This track vehicle trail starts at mile 130.4 Glen and leads to north 6.5 miles over a low ridge and on to Crooked Creek Trail.

P. Fig. 5

38. Eight Mile Trail

At mile 6.3 from Willow on Fishhook-Willow Creek Road. This swamp buggy trail leads to south.

SG. Fig. not shown.

39. Peters-Perches Creek Trail

At mile 15 (from Willow) on Fishhook-Willow Creek Road this track vehicle trail leads to the north for 3.5 miles to Peters Creek.

SG. Fig. 3

40. No Name

This swamp buggy trail starts at 17.4 miles from Willow on Fishhook-Willow Creek Road on the south side of Willow Creek. It leads south toward Deception Creek, but exact route not determined. Another branch possibly starts at mile 18.3. This system possibly ties in with PT 59.7 (see trail file).

SG. Fig. 3

41. No Name

19.7 miles from Willow on Fishhook-Willow Creek Road this track vehicle trail leads to the north for at least 3 miles. Trail passes through low, spruce forest and into alpine country.

SG, P. Fig. 3

42. Grubstake Gulch Trail

23.3 miles from Willow on the Fishhook-Willow Creek Road this trail leads to south for 3.5 miles through tundra to headwaters of Grubstake Gulch. Most of road is drivable by 2-wheel drive vehicle.

P. Fig. 3

43. Black Prospect Trail

25.4 miles from Willow on Fishhook-Willow Creek Road. This trail leads 4 miles up Cragie Creek to Black Prospect Mine in alpine country. Much of road can be driven by 2-wheel drive vehicle.

P. Fig. 3

44. Kelly Willow Prospect Trail

28.9 miles from Willow on the Fishhook-Willow Creek Road. This trail starts and leads north-east through the alpine country along Upper Willow Creek for one mile to Kelly Willow Prospect Mine.

P. Fig. 3

45. Snowbird Mine Trail

15.3 miles on the Fishhook Road from the Glen

Highway Junction (mile 49.0 Glen) the Fern Mine Trail starts leading north. Two miles in on the Fern Mine Trail the Snowbird Mine Trail (2-wheel Drive Trail) leads toward the northeast along Reed Creek for 1.5 mile to Snowbird Mine.

P. Fig. 3

46. Fern Mine Trail

15.3 miles on the Fishhook Road from the Glen Highway Junction (mile 49.0 Glen) this 2-wheel drive type trail starts. It continues north through alpine country along Archangel Creek for 4.5 miles to Fern Mine. Two miles in the trail to Snowbird Mine leads off to northeast. (See Snowbird Mine description.)

P. Fig. 3

47. Lonesome Mine Trail

14.5 miles on the Fishhook Road from the Glen Highway Junction (mile 49.0 Glen) the Lonesome Mine Trail leads off to the west about 3 miles through sub-alpine country. Start of the trail is a 2-wheel drive road, but only maintenance is by person holding grazing lease to this area.

About 2.5 miles in trail becomes a brushy
foot trail.

P. Fig. 3

48. No Name

Fishhook-Willow Creek Road starting at mile 12
(from Glen Highway Junction at Mile 49.0 Glen)
and continuing 16 miles over Hatcher Pass along
the headwaters of Willow Creek. Some trails have
already been mentioned that leave road from this
area, but entire area is alpine habitat where
no trail is needed if hunting is done on foot
or snowmachine.

P. Fig. 3

49. No Name

Turn north of Palmer-Talkeetna Highway at mile
57.2, pass through gravel pit and continue on
straight to Creek 0.7 miles in. This 2-wheel
drive road continues on, but route or length
not determined. Should be checked further.

SG. Fig. 3

50. No Name

At mile 59.7 on the Palmer-Talkeetna Highway a

2-wheel drive road takes off leading north.

Exact length and route not determined, but it is at least 2 miles and possibly longer, possibly tying in with swamp buggy trails leaving Willow Creek Road south of Willow Creek.

SG. Fig. 3

51. Lynx Lake Road

At mile 63.7 on the Palmer-Talkeetna Highway. This 2-wheel drive road takes off to the southwest and continues about 4.5 miles to Lynx Lake. 2.8 miles in a swamp buggy trail leads to the south about 5.5 miles to Butterfly Lake. Lynx Lake is part of an area designated to become the Nancy Lake Recreational Area.

SG. Fig. 3

52. Caswell Lakes Trail

At mile 88.1 Palmer-Talkeetna Road the Caswell Lakes Road leads to the east. 2.8 miles on this road a swamp buggy takes off to the northeast. Exact route and length was not determined. Should be checked further.

SG. Fig. not shown.

53. No Name

About one mile north of the Susitna Bridge on the Palmer-Sunshine Road a swamp buggy trail leads to the south for about 7.5 miles following the Susitna River. Observed from the air only. Should be checked out further.

SG. Fig. 6

54. No Name

At mile 18.2 Petersville Road trail starts just past Forks Roadhouse. This swamp buggy trail leads off to west, but route or length was not determined. Should be checked further.

SG, possibly P. Fig. 6

55. No Name

The habitat starting about 8 miles past Forks Roadhouse along Petersville Road and continuing for about 9 miles to the end of road between the Peters and Dutch Hills is alpine or sub-alpine habitat. No trail needed to hunt on foot in this area.

P. Fig. 6

56. No Name

At about mile 32.2 Petersville Road (14 miles past Forks Roadhouse) a swampbuggy trail leads off to north through alpine country. Route or length not determined. Should be checked further.

P. Fig. 6

57. Bird Creek Trail

At mile 100.7 Seward-Anchorage 2-wheel drive road leaves highway leading north. At the dump continue straight staying on the left fork. Road drivable for about 2.5 miles. After that a foot trail leads to the headwaters of Bird Creek. Total length of trail is about 11 miles. See Site No. 2, Game Birds Segment Report, 1968, Vol. X, p. 12.

SG.



Figure 1.

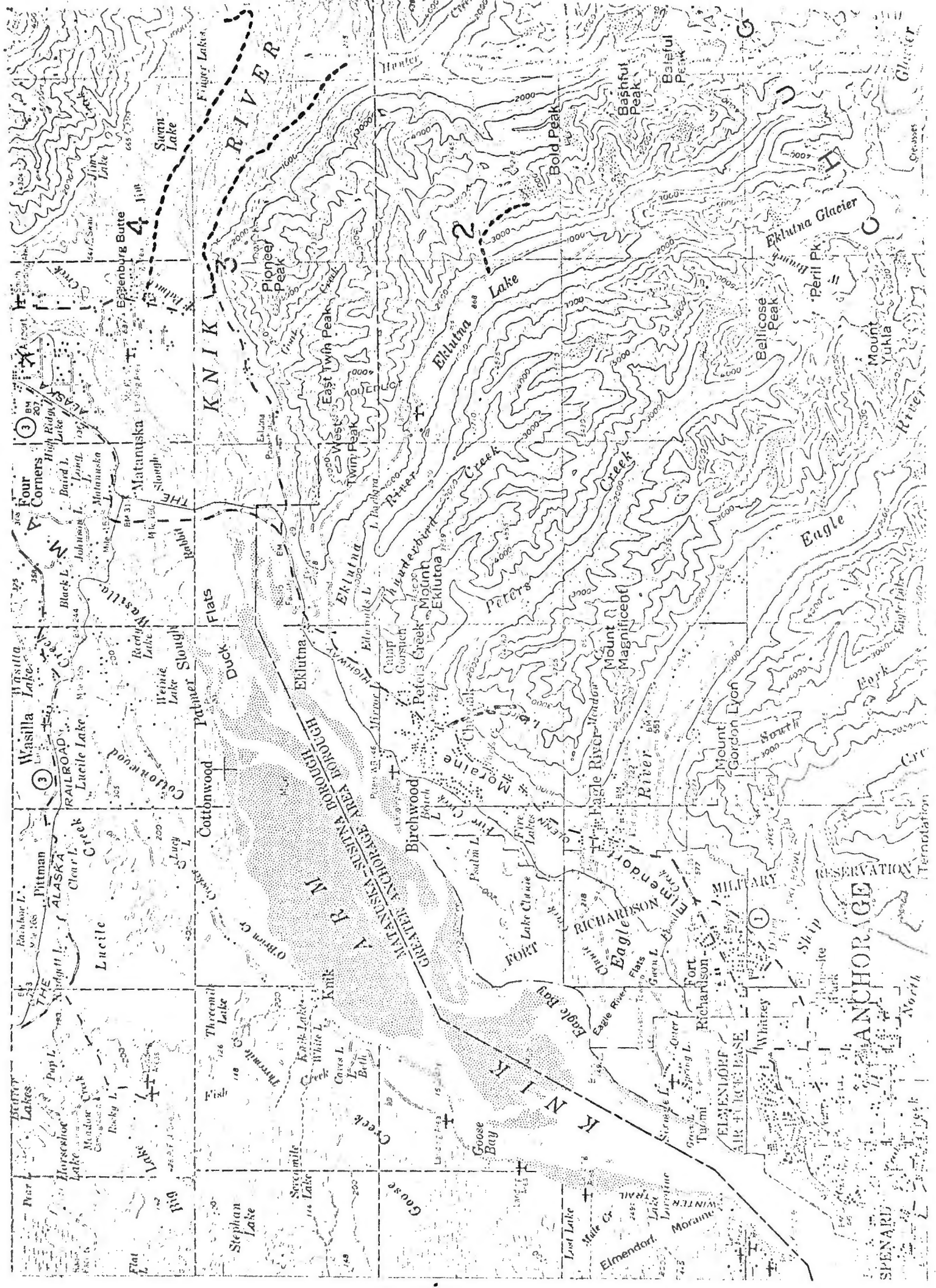




Figure 3.

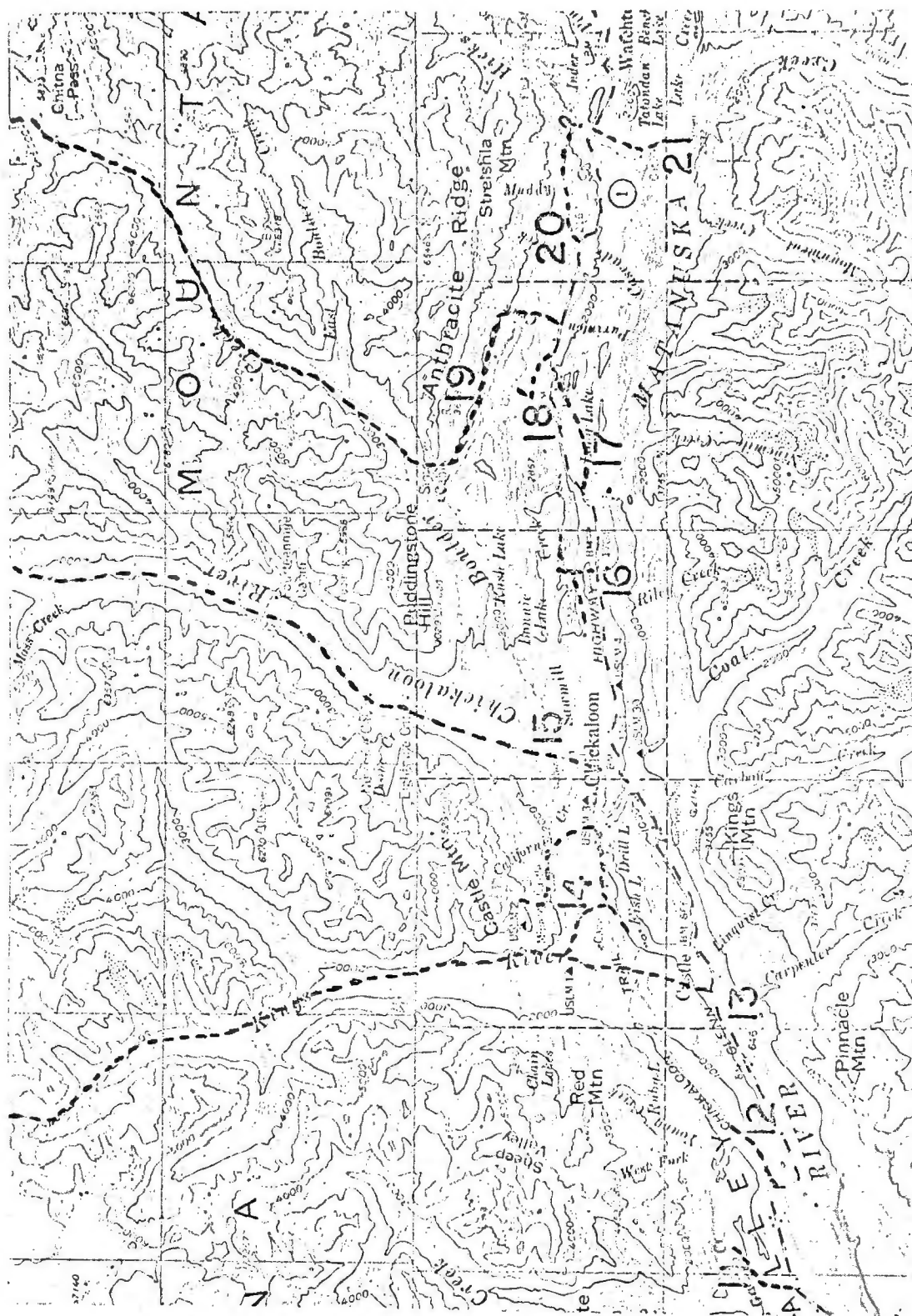


Figure 4.

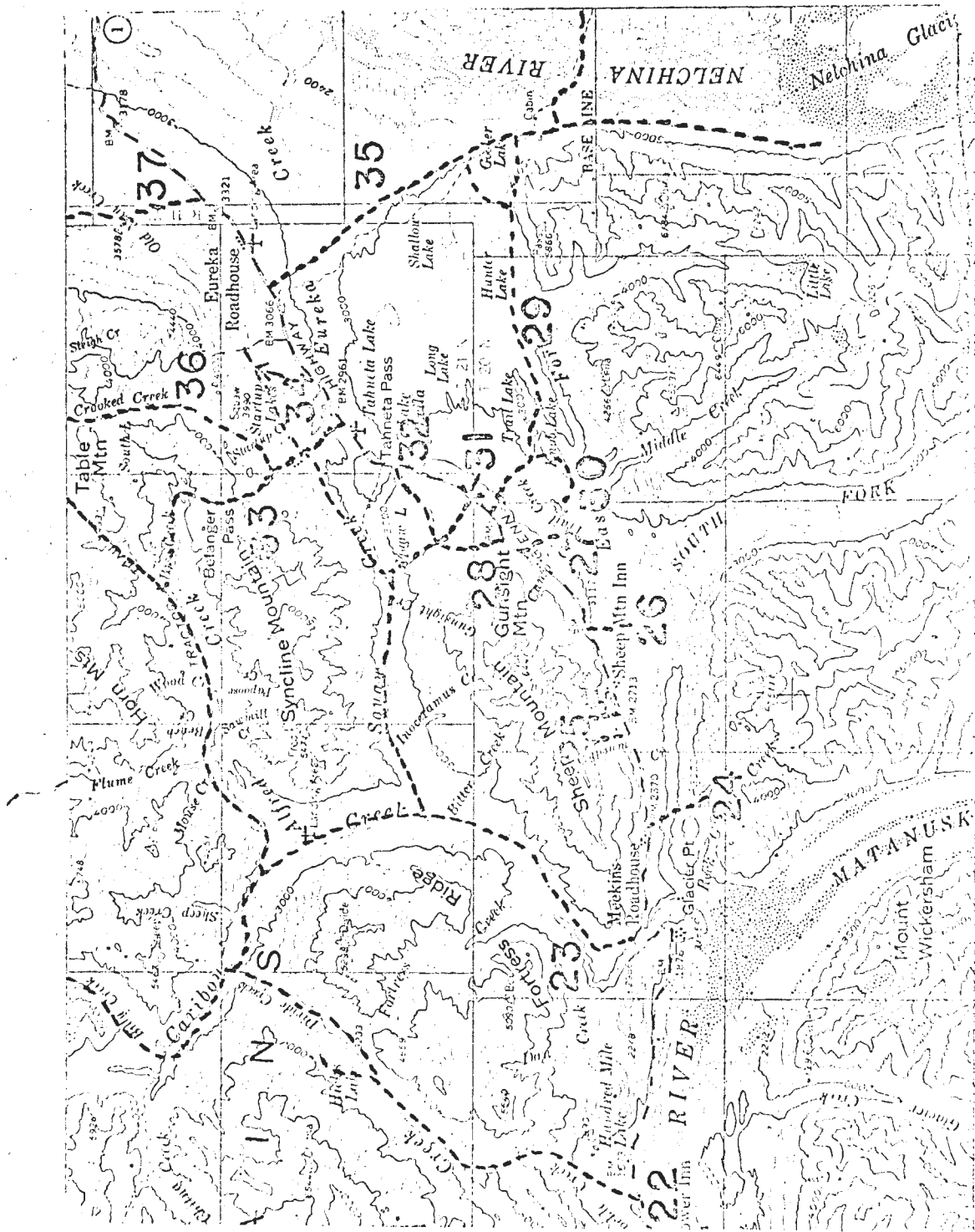


Figure 5.

