

Important Information About the Alaska River Logs

These narratives about trips on Alaska rivers are valuable even decades after they were written. However, we recommend that you to keep the following in mind as you read.

First, a word of warning: use these river logs as one source of information that you will supplement with more. Alaska rivers can be very dangerous because of their remoteness, the climate, their sources, and other factors. Bring adequate and proper clothing, equipment, and food. File a "float plan" with someone who can call for help if you do not return on time. Take a satellite phone or other communications tool if at all possible (but not usually a cell phone because of their limited coverage in Alaska). You should plan carefully for a safe and pleasant trip.

Second, note also that land status information contained in these documents may no longer be accurate. These logs were compiled long before massive land transfers of unreserved public land to restrictive public ownership or private ownership. River users should be careful to follow federal or state regulations where appropriate, and to avoid trespassing on private land. [Here is some additional information Alaska native landowners.](#) You can obtain information about access on public lands from the [Alaska Public Lands Information Center](#).

Third, be sure to also check current fishing or hunting regulations, as what was legal decades ago may not be legal today. You can obtain information about state fishing and hunting regulations from the [Alaska Department of Fish and Game website](#). More restrictive federal regulations may apply on certain federal lands.

Finally, there may be errors. We are working to make as much of this material as possible searchable by adding a text layer to the original image-only PDF files using a text capture process. This process is ongoing. Where possible, we have also converted these to HTML files. Please note that while we have corrected obvious errors generated during these processes, errors may still remain. There may also be errors in the original material.

[Return to Alaska outdoors areas](#) for more information about boating, fishing and hunting areas.

Provided by the Alaska Outdoor Supersite
www.outdoorsdirectory.com

Memorandum

TO : Files

DATE : NOV 3 1976

FROM : David Dapkus

SUBJECT: Field Inspection of Beaver Creek, August 3-11, 1976

Beaver Creek was one of 20 Alaskan rivers recommended as additions to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System by the Secretary of the Interior in December of 1973. BOR had studied Beaver Creek including conducting a inter-agency field inspection in 1972-73. The proposed land managing agency, Bureau of Land Management is presently updating the resource data on the river. Staff of the Fairbanks District Office (BLM) requested that BOR participate in a field inspection of the river as part of the effort to update existing resource data. Participating in the inspection were:

Dave Scott, BLM, Fairbanks District Office
 Elliott Lowe, BLM, Fairbanks District Office
 Clyde Murray, BLM, Fairbanks District Office
 Bruce Durtsche, BLM, Fairbanks District Office
 LaRalle Smith, BLM, State Office, Anchorage
 David Dapkus, BOR, Alaska Field Office, Anchorage

Three 17 foot canoes were used for the field inspection.

August 3

I flew to Fairbanks via Wien in the late afternoon in order to be available for the next mornings early flight via helicopter into Beaver Creek.

August 4

Flew in to the confluence of Ophir Creek with Nome Creek starting at 7 a.m., on a sunny, hot day via a Bell 206B helicopter. The canoes had been flown in two days earlier. On the flight in we saw ATV/4 wheel drive tracks/trail along Ophir Creek. The put-in spot is within the proposed wild river boundary. A large cabin, apparently built in 1975-76, is located at the put-in and apparently is a miner's cabin although the only visible mining equipment was a pick. A tsack vehicle was setting near the cabin.



We floated to O'Brien Creek on the Beaver from Ophir Creek a distance of about 10 miles. Ophir Creek was 10'-15' wide and was too rocky and shallow to float. Nome Creek was a series of 1"-4" riffles connecting 1'-2' deep pools; it varied from 25'-50' in width, clear, flowing at 2 mph over a rocky channel with fist to basketball size rocks. Although it was so shallow in some riffles that we needed to pull the canoes across them, Nome Creek is generally floatable from Ophir Creek. Beaver Creek was also a series of pools (1'-4') and riffles (1"-6"), 40'-60' wide, clear, and flowing at 2 mph over a rocky channel. Beaver Creek had some sweepers and boulders, but it and Nome Creek offered good Class I water on the International Whitewater Scale.

The Beaver flows through a dense mixed white spruce-paper birch forest with willows near the water and tundra on the high slopes of the White Mountains. Forested two thousand foot high rolling hills surround Beaver Creek with the White Mountains rising 3,000'-4,000' on the north and east of Beaver Creek. The White Mountains with their limestone peaks were almost always in view. The thick forested area and the clear waters of Beaver Creek combine with the White Mountains to create a beautiful scene for a float trip. Good campsites are plentiful on gravelbars or on the forest edge. There were recently made ATV tracks on the gravelbar at camp. Some garbage, a firepit, and cut wood were evidence of previous campers at O'Brien Creek.

We saw a black bear on the banks of Beaver Creek just below the confluence of Nome Creek, several ducks, and moose sign on the gravelbars. Grayling fishing was excellent, we caught several averaging about 12".

August 5

Floated 14 miles today to an old cabin about three miles below Brigham Creek. The river continued to be a series of long pools (2'-6') deep and riffles (1"-12") deep, but widened to 75' and picked up speed (3-5 mph). It continued to flow through a rocky channel of mainly fist size rocks and some small boulders. There were some sweepers which with the river making several tight bends, kept us alert. We scraped the canoe bottom only a few times and did not have to pull them through any riffles. Good campsites continued to be plentiful and the scenery pleasing. We did not see any more ATV tracks, however we did check out three old fallen down

cabins located along the riverbanks. Saw two beaver and many dams/lodges, ducks, moose and bear sign, and fresh wolf tracks. The day was warm and sunny.

August 6

The river continued to be clear pools (5'-15') and riffles (4"-8") as we covered about 14 miles to camp about four miles beyond the "Big Bend." We scraped the canoe bottom very little. The river was 25'-75' wide, flowing at 3-4 mph and continued to be clear. A few tight turns, sweepers, and occasional large rocks required some maneuvering.

Scenery at the "Big Bend" - Beaver Creek makes a 90o bend from west to north around the White Mountains - was superb. Hiking opportunities are excellent along the river in this area. Stopped at the BLM public use cabin at Wickersham Creek; it had been cleaned and repaired by YCC youth the previous week. Several groups had hiked in the Wickersham Dome trail to the cabin this summer. We also inspected a Native allotment on the north side of Beaver Creek in the "Big Bend." There were no signs of use just a sign identifying the allotment. We saw one-cow moose, four broods of ducks, four eagles, and three peregrine falcons. Grayling fishing continued to be great.

August 7

Floated about 15 miles to camp near Windy Creek. Beaver Creek slowed to 2 mph flowing mostly through 3'-12' deep pools was 40'-100' wide and clear, with no hazards other than an occasional sweeper. Looked at a well maintained log cabin built around 1964 which lies on the west bank near Fossil Creek. There is a good grass airstrip next to the cabin that is semi-blocked from the river by spruce trees. Rock outcroppings rise occasionally from the rivers edge in this section of the river adding to the scenery.

August 8

Floated from Windy Creek to near Willow Creek, about 25 miles through a steady rain. The river was clear, 100' wide, 3'-15' deep except for a few riffles, and had a current of 3 mph. Although Beaver Creek pulls away from the White Mountains to parallel them at a 3-4 mile distance, the view from the river continued to be excellent of the White Mountains, paralleling forested hills, and rock outcroppings at the rivers edge. We saw geese, ducks, beaver, and enjoyed more excellent grayling fishing. Also found wolf, bear, lynx, and moose tracks.

It rained from noon through the rest of the day.

August 9

Rained all day as we floated about 16 miles to camp near Yellow Creek. River flowed 3 mph through a 100' rocky channel at depths of 3'-15". There were a few sweepers and small log pileups, but could be readily avoided.

We enjoyed views of Victoria Mountain on the west and the White Mountains on the east all day. The river cuts sheer 75' high rock cliffs in many places as it skirts Victoria Mountain. Passed two gravelbars which were estimated to be large enough for a small wheeled plane to land. Neither appear to have been used as landing strips however. Saw one grizzly bear, beaver, seven Dall sheep (Victoria Mt.), ducks and geese. Also saw one king salmon and caught enough grayling for supper.

August 10

Floated from Yellow Creek to a point about 12 miles below Victoria Creek (total of 18 miles for the day). Beaver Creek continued to flow about three mph, averaged 100' wide, was clear, and varied from 3'-10' in depth. Victoria Creek was roaring and slightly dirty. It is 20' wide and 2'-5' deep.

There are two cabins in use on the east bank of Beaver Creek at Victoria Creek confluence. We talked with the owners son who was there alone while his parents were in Fairbanks. They trap along Beaver Creek and do some guiding. Scenery was excellent until we got several miles passed Victoria Creek where it was pleasing but without the sheer rock cliffs and the close mountains were not as grand as before. We saw a black bear sow with two cubs about two miles below Victoria Creek. Grayling fishing continued to be excellent. Although this section of Beaver Creek is supposed to be good Northern pike fishing we did not catch any pike to prove it. Some of the straight and deeper stretches of the river below Victoria Creek could possibly be suitable for small float plane landings, however we do not know if such landings have occurred in the past.

August 11

5

Picked up by helicopter at 9:30 a.m. and returned to Fairbank
Flew via Wien to Anchorage arriving at Anchorage at 1 p.m.

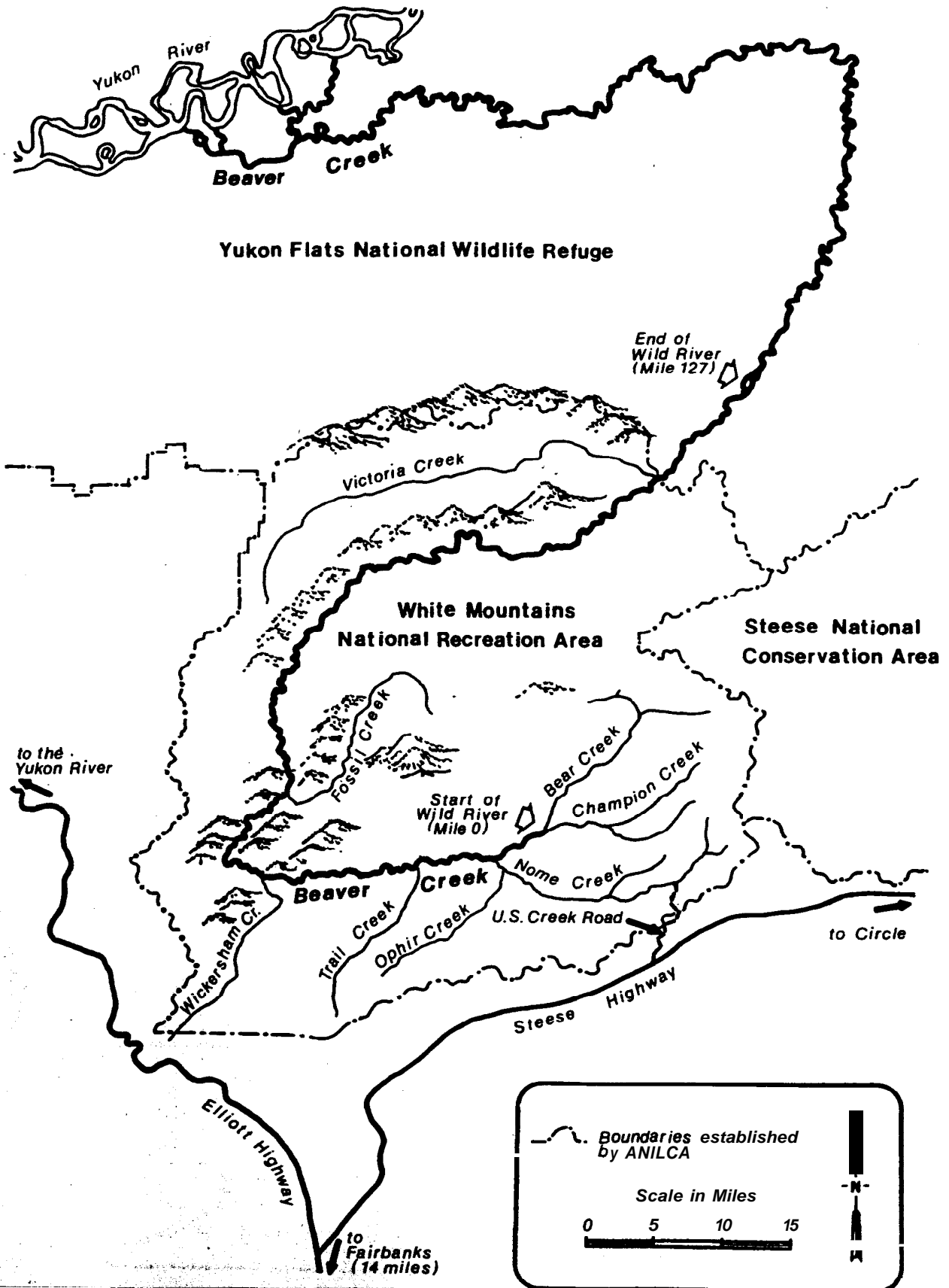
General

We covered about 120 miles of Beaver Creek in 6 1/2 easy days
It offers a good float trip for the novice canoeist as it is
continuous Class I water with sweepers, particularly in the
upper section, being the main hazard. There are no rapids.
It's scenery, grayling fishery, and recreational opportunities
are three of its outstanding features.

Dave Dapkus

Beaver Creek National Wild River

Area Map



Beaver Creek National Wild River (127 miles)

Put-in: Nome Creek Road, off U.S. Creek Road at MP 57 Steese Highway, or fly in

Take-out: Victoria Creek (fly out) or Dalton Bridge at MP 55 Dalton Highway

Rating: Primarily Class-I water

Time: 7 days to 3 weeks float

Summer recreational opportunities, rafting, canoeing, hunting and fishing