

The BLM has also addressed the Sinuk River above the King Island selection. In 1982 the agency determined the river nonnavigable in State-selected T. 7 S., R. 33 W., and T. 8 S., Rs. 34-35 W., Kateel River Meridian based on a lack of evidence of past use and physical unsusceptibility. 518/ The State Director also declared the river nonnavigable in T. 9 S., R. 36 W., Kateel River Meridian within the Nome village selection on the last day of 1981. However, the BLM's easement staff in 1977 had approved a streamside and streambed easement and a site easement at the Nome-Teller road crossing which included part of the riverbed, noting the Sinuk's popularity among fishermen and that floaters also used it. The BLM rejected these easements in May 1979 because of their recreational basis. 519/

CRIPPLE CREEK

The USGS's Frank C. Schrader, Alfred H. Brooks, and D. C. Witherspoon visited the newly-found gold district surrounding Nome in October 1899. One or more of these men traveled to and mapped the Cripple Creek drainage. Their subsequent report included it along with the Snake, Nome, Penny, Solomon, and Bonanza rivers as a water body with a "generally rather swift" current and up which "small boats" could proceed "8 to 10 miles" to the placer fields. 520/ They added that, "In the Nome region, along the coast, waterways, and streams of sufficient size, travel and transportation are principally by small boats and canoes. Across the country there are as yet but few definite and well-marked trails." 521/

The longest and most consistently documented boat use on Cripple Creek occurred at its mouth to transport those traveling the coastal Nome to Teller trail in the summer. In 1916 over one hundred residents of the Nome area petitioned the Alaska Road Commission for a bridge over the river at its mouth asserting that, "The miners have no way of getting their supplies across Cripple River [sic], and it does not only work a hardship on them, but it is extremely dangerous for anyone to cross the river without a foot bridge, during the open season." 522/ A. Polet, the chairman of the Nome-Seward Peninsula Chamber of Commerce's Board of Directors, soon after wrote backing a foot bridge over the river. He stated that there was no ferry there and that "the river is deep enough and swift enough to be impassable [sic] for foot travellers nearly all summer." 523/

At least by 1920 the Road Commission had installed a free ferry service composed of a boat on an endless cable where the trail met the river. An ARC district officer reported in 1921 that the cable was four hundred feet long. It was attached to a whale boat. 524/ In 1935 the Commission still maintained a rowboat at the crossing. That year 262 people took the boat across the river. 525/

The BLM has addressed the navigability of Cripple Creek in Tps. 9-11 S., R. 36 W. and most of its course in T. 9 S., R. 35 W., Kateel River Meridian while processing Nome's ANCSA conveyance. An undated navigability report stated that shallow-draft boats were used in the area and that tidal influence extended about a half mile upstream. At no stage in its work did BLM evidence any inclination to determine the creek navigable; the State Director on the last day of 1981 declared the river nonnavigable, but stated that tidal influence extended to the north section line of Sec. 12, T. 11 S., R. 36 W., Kateel River Meridian. 526/

PENNY RIVER

Frank C. Schrader, Alfred H. Brooks, and D. C. Witherspoon of the USGS visited the newly-found gold district surrounding Nome in October 1899. One or more of these men