

UNIT 14: MEARES PASSAGE

MANAGEMENT INTENT

Management of state lands will focus on protection of fish and wildlife habitat and harvest, and recreation values.

State Uplands: Settlement is anticipated at Hook Arm because of high fish and wildlife values, offshore commercial fishing activities, and planned resource development nearby. During the 20-year life of the plan, the selection at Hook Arm will be managed for general use, including commercial recreation and commercial fishing support activities. The intent is to allow a variety of opportunities to develop an economic base for a prospective community. Long-term management intent for the selection is land disposal for a small community based on commercial fishing and recreation.

The north shore has the most suitable land for community development. Activities should initially locate on the north shore to avoid creating two communities. When authorizing individual activities, such as a commercial recreation lease, siting guidelines and development plans should be used to reserve options for eventual residential development. Sufficient land appropriate for a community center should be reserved in the area best suited for that use. Only activities that are compatible with a community center, such as a store or public dock, should be allowed within the community center. The uplands next to the best anchorage should be reserved for public and commercial water-related uses.

No land disposals are planned during the 20-year life of the plan because of current low demand for land. A land disposal may be reconsidered during periodic plan review. Any future land disposal should consider impacts on existing uses, the ability to mitigate conflicts through design and implementation of a particular disposal, and cumulative impacts. See Chapter 4 for additional selection information.

State Tidelands and Submerged Lands: Much of the unit, especially the area along south Suemez Island from Cape Felix east through Meares Passage has very valuable habitat and recreation resources. This area is designated an Area Meriting Special Attention (AMSA) in the Hydaburg Coastal Management Program. The AMSA designation was made because the area is important for subsistence harvest of seaweed, abalone, deer, mink, and land otter, and unique scenic and recreation values. The basalt columns near Cape Felix and the large sandy beaches at Arena Cove are distinctive landscapes. The area has high visual sensitivity because of heavy boat traffic and recreational use. Management of state tidelands and submerged lands within the area will be consistent with the management plan for the AMSA specified in the Hydaburg Coastal Management Plan.

There are three general areas where resource development support facilities may be located. They are in Hook Arm, Bobs Bay, and on north Dall Island west of the Bush Islets. Because of weather limitations on the outer coast, a road network to east Dall

or north Dall Island may be an option. Any resource transfer sites proposed for north Dall Island within the AMSA must be consistent with the AMSA policies. A few areas on the north and northwest coast of Dall Island are slated for possible A-frame timber harvest.

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY USES

Refer to the Land Use Designation Map for primary and secondary uses and fish and wildlife ratings.

PROHIBITED USES

- Mineral location in mapped crucial fish and wildlife habitat and harvest areas.
- Filling state tidelands and submerged lands for residential purposes.
- Floathomes

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Refer to Chapter 2 for guidelines common to this and all management units. The following guidelines apply to this specific unit.

- **Developed Recreation Facilities in Crucial Habitat and Harvest Areas.** Based on available information, developed recreation facilities are initially determined incompatible within mapped crucial fish and wildlife areas. A specific proposal for a developed recreation facility may be considered for compatibility based on its design or on new habitat information.
- **Anchorage.** Use of anchorages depicted on the land use designation map will not be precluded.
- **Public Access to Cabin Site at Arena Cove.** Arena Cove is a potential site for a Forest Service recreation cabin, and access across tidelands to the site will not be precluded.
- **Public Access to Arena Cove - Port Refugio Trail.** Access to the potential trail between Arena Cove and Port Refugio will not be precluded.
- **Public Access to Manhattan Arm - View Cove Trail and Campsite.** Public access across tidelands adjacent to the trail easement between Manhattan Arm and the public campsite at the head of View Cove will not be precluded.
- **Hydaburg Involvement within AMSA.** The City of Hydaburg will be involved in review of proposed actions within the Area Meriting Special Attention designated under the Hydaburg Coastal Management Program. Copies of pertinent applications and notices will be sent to the City during the review process.

- **Permanent Resource Transfer at Bobs Bay - North Dall Island.** Forestry designations for a resource transfer site have been made in two sections of Bobs Bay as well as on North Dall Island in Meares Passage. These designations are for alternative sites for a single facility to be sited on Dall Island north of Diver Bay. Only one of the two sites will be used unless it is determined that using both sites is a more feasible and prudent alternative considering impacts to upland and marine fish and wildlife habitat and harvest areas. If the AMSA criteria can be met, the Meares Passage location is preferred to any location in Bobs Bay.
- **Offshore Fisheries Conservation Zones.** Areas designated Resource Management offshore along the outer coast will be managed as fisheries conservation zones under the Alaska Coastal Management Program.

NOTES

- Six heritage sites have been identified in this unit:

AHRS CRG-94	Cape Lookout Village
AHRS CRG-110	Hook Arm Village
AHRS CRG-121	Meares Passage Village
AHRS CRG-122	Meares Seasonal Village
AHRS CRG-132	Ridge Island Village
AHRS CRG-140	Suemez Island Village

FISH AND WILDLIFE INFORMATION

There are twelve anadromous fish stream outlets in the unit.

A commercial seine fishery occurs in the area, with many hookoff points. An intensive commercial fishery for abalone occurs along the rocky outer coastline of Dall Island, the outer portions of all bays, and the shores of Meares Passage. Important salmon rearing habitat exists around Ulloa Island.

Several high-density use areas for harbor seals are included in the unit. Two seabird colonies are located in the unit, at Millar Rocks and on East Diver Island.

