

UNIT 18: HETTA INLET

MANAGEMENT INTENT

State lands will be managed to maintain fish and wildlife habitat and harvest while allowing support facilities for upland resource development. Tidelands sites will be available for mineral and timber development support activities within designated areas. The unit contains many anadromous fish streams and extensive crucial habitat for salmon rearing. Subsistence and commercial harvest activities are intensive, and extensive kelp beds are present in many areas. These beds are noted specifically along the east shore of Hetta Inlet north of Corbin Point, and from approximately one-half mile south of Simmons Point to approximately one-quarter mile north of Copper Harbor.

The Hetta Cove and Eek Inlet areas are an Area Meriting Special Attention (AMSA) under the Hydaburg Coastal Management Program. The AMSA is designated for its importance for traditional and customary subsistence harvest of sockeye salmon, mink, marten, and land otter. State tidelands and submerged lands management within the Hetta Cove and Eek Inlet AMSA will be consistent with the AMSA management plan. Hetta Cove and those waters in the immediate vicinity used by schooling salmon will be protected from any significant impacts associated with development activities. Critical fish spawning and schooling areas and subsistence use areas should be protected from significant impacts within the Hetta Cove and Eek Inlet areas.

Habitat is designated a secondary use in some important fish and wildlife habitat or harvest areas (Hc). This will be considered in siting and managing all activities directly related to shore-attached facilities where there are primary designations for forestry and mining. Appropriate siting or operating stipulations (which may include timing restrictions) will be considered to mitigate negative impacts on the habitat resources and to meet the management intent for this unit. Even where habitat is designated a secondary use in important fish and wildlife habitat and harvest areas (Hc), it will be managed as a primary use when reviewing proposals for uses that are not directly related to or necessary for the operation of a shore-attached facility where there is a primary designation of forestry or mining. Abalone subsistence harvest areas in outer Copper Harbor, shrimp fishery areas from Copper Harbor to Corbin Point, and Dungeness crab subsistence harvest areas along the eastern shore from Jumbo Island north to Dall Island are the important habitat resources. These areas also have waterfowl and seabird concentrations.

SUBUNIT 18A

This subunit includes approximately two miles of the east side of Hetta Inlet from just north of Jumbo Creek to the point where Hetta Inlet bends to the east. Some resource agencies are concerned that a sill near Jumbo Island (see Notes) may restrict flushing of upper Hetta Inlet. Present information indicates transfer options for timber and minerals require siting north of or adjacent to Jumbo Island within crucial habitat near the mouth of Jumbo Creek. Additional field information will be required to locate the best site for a resource transfer facility.

SUBUNIT 18B

This subunit includes approximately three miles of the eastern shore of Hetta Inlet from the southern boundary of Hetta Cove AMSA south to the section line just north of Cedar No. 2.

SUBUNIT 18C

This subunit includes approximately four miles of the eastern shore of Hetta Inlet from the section line just north of Cedar No. 2, south to Lime Point.

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY USES

Refer to land use designation maps 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 also apply to this specific unit and to the subunits:

- **Consolidation and Joint Use of Resource Transfer Sites.** If upland mineral exploration and development occur, consolidation and joint use of resource transfer sites will be encouraged unless it is determined that separate sites are a more feasible and prudent alternative considering impacts to upland and marine fish and wildlife habitat and harvest areas.
- **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.
- **Access to Private Uplands.** Private landowners are guaranteed access rights across state tidelands. However, fill used to enhance access will not be allowed in mapped crucial fish and wildlife habitat and harvest areas unless determined compatible through review procedures.

- **Design of Access Structures at Sulzer Passage.** Any structure placed on tidelands or submerged lands for access to private uplands in Sulzer Passage will be designed to allow fish passage and should not interfere with flushing.
- **Gould Island Timber Access.** Timber on Gould Island may need to be accessed. If feasible and prudent, a system will be used that does not require in-water transfer. The possibility of a bridge connecting Gould Island with the southern shore of Hetta Inlet to allow timber access will be considered.
- **Use of Fill at Inner Copper Harbor.** Use of fill for any proposed structure on tidelands or submerged lands at inner Copper Harbor will not be allowed unless determined compatible through review procedures.
- **Consolidation of Resource Transfer Sites in Upper Hetta Inlet.** Until an interconnected road system eliminates the need for a resource transfer site in Upper Hetta Inlet, all resource transfer facilities that use state tidelands and submerged lands will be consolidated at the existing site near Sulzer unless it is determined that another site is a more feasible and prudent alternative, considering impacts to upland and marine fish and wildlife habitat and harvest areas.
- **Review of Log Transfer Operations near Sulzer.** Log transfer operations near Sulzer in upper Hetta Inlet will be monitored for excessive accumulations of bark and other debris that would cause unacceptable environmental impacts. This review will take place every other year beginning the second year of operation. The review will include feasible and prudent alternatives including using another transfer site, or an interconnected road system to eliminate the need for the facility near Sulzer. Appropriate mitigation measures may be required as a result of the review.
- **Anchorage.** Use of anchorages depicted on the land use designation maps will not be precluded.

SUBUNIT 18A

- **Siting, Design and Operation of Resource Transfer Facilities.** Due to reported poor flushing characteristics in the area, resource development support facilities should be sited, designed, and operated in a manner to minimize bark deposition.
- **Public Access to Jumbo Creek Campsite.** Public access across tidelands to the Jumbo Creek campsite will not be precluded.
- **Resource Transfer Site near Jumbo Creek.**
 - a) Adequate protection of anadromous fish habitat will be a criterion for locating any facility near Jumbo Creek. To the extent feasible and prudent, facilities will avoid eelgrass beds. Land managers are reminded of the Forest Practices Regulations (11 AAC 95.150 (c)) that require ADF&G approval, in writing, of any LTF or storage site within 300 feet of an anadromous fish stream or areas important for fish spawning or rearing.
 - b) Before authorizing facilities on state tidelands or submerged lands, the DNR manager, in consultation with other resource agencies, should consider obtaining updated information through new dives that compare the present condition of the bottom with that documented in the 1974 USF&WS dives.

c) Log sort, log storage, and camp facilities associated with a transfer facility will be located on the uplands unless it is determined that in-water sites are more feasible and prudent alternatives considering impacts to upland and marine fish and wildlife habitat and harvest areas.

SUBUNIT 18B

- **Permanent Resource Transfer Sites Limited.** There will be only one resource transfer site allowed within this area unless it is determined that more than one site is a more feasible and prudent alternative considering impacts to upland and marine fish and wildlife habitat and harvest areas.
- **Conflicts between Commercial Fishing and Development activities.** Because of heavy purse seine fishing, any development activities on tidelands and submerged lands should take measures to minimize conflicts with the fishing activity. These measures may include timing restrictions or other management techniques.

SUBUNIT 18C

- **Conflicts between Commercial Fishing and Development activities.** Because of heavy purse seine fishing, any development activities on tidelands and submerged lands should take measures to minimize conflicts with the fishing activity. These measures may include timing restrictions or other management techniques.
- **Tailings Disposal Areas and Permanent Resource Transfer Sites Limited.** In areas where mining is designated a secondary use, mineral exploration activities will be allowed. Permanent transfer facilities and tailings disposal in those areas will not be allowed unless determined compatible through review procedures.

NOTES

- Several patented mining claims exist in the unit.
- Seven heritage sites are located within the unit:
 - AHRS CRG-3 Hetta Inlet Pictographs
 - AHRS CRG-4 Copper City
 - AHRS CRG-25 Eek Inlet Village
 - AHRS CRG-26 Hetta
 - AHRS CRG-49 Sulzer Townsite
 - AHRS CRG-99 Copper Harbor Pictograph
 - AHRS CRG-108 Hetta Point Petroglyphs
- National Marine Fisheries Service made two dives on the south shore of Deer Bay. These sites were found unsuitable for resource transfer facilities.

FISH AND WILDLIFE INFORMATION

Thirteen anadromous fish stream outlets are located within the unit.

The National Marine Fisheries Service recommended against log transfer facilities north of Jumbo Island. Field investigations in Hetta Inlet, including dives, were conducted in 1974 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The dive sites were Deer Bay, Copper Harbor (two locations), and Jumbo Island (three locations). Although the dive reports indicated there was approximately three inches of litter composed of bark and wood debris under a log raft near Jumbo Creek, the report does not specifically document poor flushing action in the area north of Jumbo Island.

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Hetta Inlet is typical of many fjord inlets with a series of basins from the mouth to the terminus. Jumbo Island creates the first major constriction of the inlet and coincides with a sill rising from the inlet floor. The depth is 180 feet at the sill, while just inside the sill (an inner basin) the depth is 360 feet.

The area around and east of Gould Island is described as shallow and restricted. The report recommends that Portage Bay be avoided as a log rafting or dumping site because of poor flushing action caused by the restricted passage at Gould Island.

The Eek Inlet and Hetta Cove Area Meriting Special Attention was approved based on its importance for traditional and customary subsistence harvests of salmon and fur-bearers. The stream and lake systems and estuarine rearing and schooling areas provide crucial habitat for salmon. Hetta Lake and Creek is the largest sockeye salmon producing system in the general area, with four distinct units. It is a prime candidate for enhancement through lake fertilization. Eek Inlet has also been considered for possible aquaculture development. Both systems are considered among the highest quality sport fish watersheds in southeast Alaska. Hetta Lake Creek, within Sections 22 and 27, is a pink salmon pre-emergent fry sample site.

Salmon rearing habitat is present in Deer Bay, Copper Harbor, and Portage Bay. Portage Bay is a very important producer of pink salmon. Portage Creek, Section 18, is a pink salmon pre-emergent fry sample site.

Purse seiners intensively fish the shoreline on the eastern side of Hetta south of Hetta Cove. Extensive kelp beds are present at the mouth of Copper Harbor and south of Corbin Point. The upper part of Hetta Inlet north, south, and west of Gould Island is shallow and productive, with extensive kelp beds.

