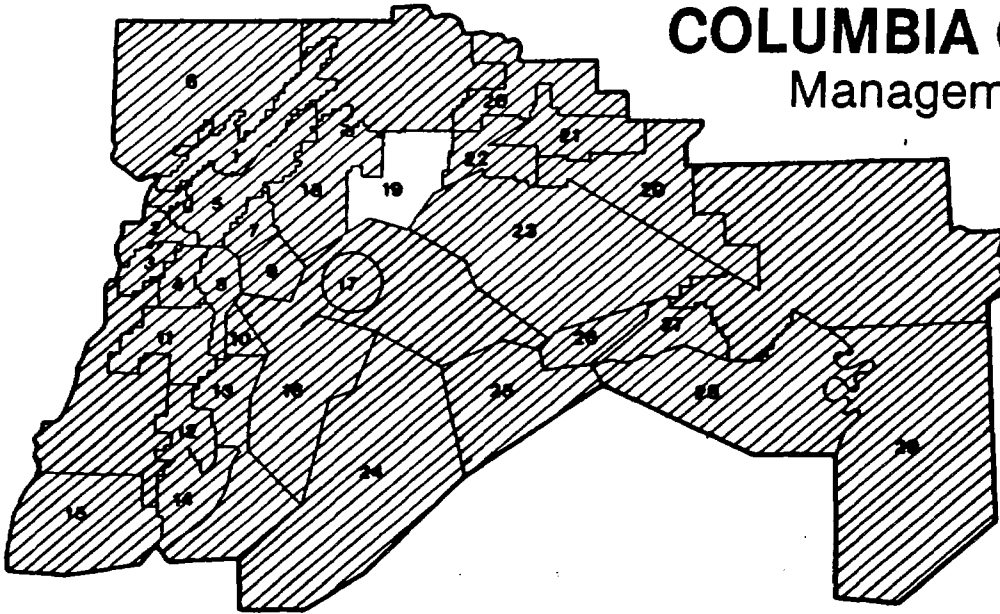

COLUMBIA GLACIER

Management Unit 19



Background

The Columbia Glacier, one of the largest tidewater glaciers in North America, flows from the flanks of the Chugach Mountains into Columbia Bay. The glacier is the most famous natural feature in Prince William Sound. The spectacular landscape and abundant sea life make the bay a popular destination for all categories of watercraft, from skiffs to ocean liners. The glacier is also a destination for airplane and helicopter tours.

The USFS manages most uplands in the unit. Native corporations own or have selected Heather Island, Growler Island, and land near Heather Bay. The state has selected uplands on Glacier Island and owns the tidelands throughout the unit. Glacier Island is less than 25 miles from Tatitlek and provides recreation for residents of Tatitlek. A previous state selection in Granite Cove was relinquished because the state's management intent for the area can easily be accommodated under Forest Service management.

Most of the publicly owned land is within the proposed USFS wilderness area. The wilderness proposal includes all land in the management unit except for Heather, Growler, and Glacier islands, and the west arm of Long Bay. The Native-owned land is likely to support commercial recreation facilities that will serve the tourist and recreation use of the area. The federal land is open to mineral entry. Land inside the wilderness boundary is likely to be closed when Congress acts on the wilderness proposal. The unit contains no mineral areas likely to be developed within the next 20 years.

Management Intent

Management of the state-owned uplands and tidelands in this area will emphasize the scenic resources and wildlife habitat that draw the existing public and tourist use. State management will accommodate the access needs of private land owners, especially to support commercial recreation facilities. Most state lands remain open to mineral entry. Seven estuaries will be closed to protect salmon spawn-

ing and rearing habitat and to prevent conflicts with those resources.

Development on state land, including access across state tidelands, will be designed and located to protect the splendor of the natural surroundings. At the same time, the development of access and facilities will be encouraged, as appropriate, to create a variety of opportunities for the recreation and tourist industry. Development of commercial recreation and tourist facilities will be encouraged on private land, Heather and Growler Islands.

Because of the important public values, including its importance as a tourist destination, development of facilities on state land and tidelands for purposes other than recreation and tourism are prohibited in most parts of this unit. Floatlodes are prohibited in all parts except Glacier Island, Subunit 19D. Mariculture and other tideland facilities inconsistent with the stated values are prohibited near the major tourist destinations: Subunit 19A, Columbia Bay; 19B, Heather Island; 19C, Heather Bay; and 19D, Glacier Island.

Subunit 19A - Columbia Bay. This subunit contains the Columbia Glacier, the most popular tourist attraction in Prince William Sound. The subunit is within the USFS wilderness proposal area. The area should be retained in its natural state. Tideland development that would detract from the natural beauty and public use of the area will not be sited in this subunit. Mariculture and floatlodes are prohibited in this subunit because of the importance of the natural landscape to the tourist industry.

This subunit also contains Granite Cove. The mouth to this cove is frequently blocked by ice from the Columbia Glacier, making access to the area difficult, if not impossible. If the iceblocked conditions change, the cove will be a valuable anchorage and camping spot to complement the recreational use of the Columbia Glacier. Tideland management will maintain the natural landscape and en-

courage the use of the area for camping and mooring.

Subunit 19B - Heather Island. This subunit includes tidelands on the west side of Heather Island. The uplands on Heather Island are owned by Tatitlek Corporation. Access to the uplands, such as a dock, may need to be developed on state tidelands. The tidelands will be managed to ensure access to these uplands. Docks or other access should, if feasible, be concentrated in one location rather than dispersed throughout the subunit. If a second access point is needed, it will be directed to Heather Bay unless the land manager determines that a second point would have little or no significant negative effect on the recreation and visual qualities of Columbia Bay; or there are no feasible and prudent alternatives. Public mooring buoys for general recreation use are not appropriate in this unit.

Subunit 19C - Heather Bay. State-owned tidelands in this subunit should be managed to ensure access to the uplands while protecting public access to the important recreation and tourist resources on public lands. These resources include the anchorages and sport-fishing use of the stream at the head of the bay. Access across state tidelands in this area should be sited so as not to significantly diminish the capacity of the three anchorages in the area. Public mooring buoys in this unit are appropriate only if necessary to expand the mooring capacity and are consistent with the management of the immediately adjacent uplands.

Subunit 19D - Glacier Island. Glacier Island is opposite the Columbia Glacier. Commercial recreation services are appropriate for the area, but should be developed on private land on Heather and Growler Islands (the small island immediately adjacent to the state selection) not on state lands. State land should be managed to support commercial recreation development on private land such as providing a water source, access, or hiking trails. The recreation emphasis on state lands will include serving the portions of the recreation market that are not adequately served by

development on private land. For example, if private development includes a lodge, state land might be used for a fuel stop and campsites for the general public. However, the type and amount of facilities will be determined considering the existing and likely development on private and USFS land. The objective is for the overall amount, pattern, type, and price to be appropriate considering all landowners. This recreation development will enhance community recreation patterns if residents of Tatitlek and the rest of Prince William Sound.

Services at Glacier and Esther Islands will facilitate the recreational use of the Whittier to Valdez marine route. For this reason, the combination of private and state facilities should include safe moorings, campsites, and a fuel stop. They may also include viewing platforms, trails, and lodge facilities.

The original selection is proposed to be expanded east and south to allow access from the southern entrance to the Island (Chamberlain Bay and Jackson Hole). A further, "Priority C" selection is proposed to consolidate land management and give the state the ability to manage a greater portion of the useful public use areas on the island. (See Chapter 5). A portion of the "Priority C" area was nominated by the USFS to consolidate land ownership on the island.

Subunit 19E - Long Bay. Long Bay, except for the western arm, is inside the proposed USFS wilderness area. The tidelands should be managed for multiple use with emphasis on protecting the recreation resource including anchorages, campsites, and visual resources.

Subunit 19F - Billy's Hole. Tideland management in this subunit will ensure access to the area for sport fishing. Due to the small size of the subunit, incompatible uses should not be sited here if a prudent and feasible alternative exists.

Subunit 19G - Marine Route. This subunit includes tidelands of the frequently used travel route to and from Columbia Bay. A

portion of the subunit is within the proposed USFS wilderness area. Management of the state tidelands in this subunit should emphasize public recreation and maintaining access for the commercial fishery. Tidelands along the marine route should be maintained in their natural state.

Mariculture and other tideland facilities are allowed if they are mostly underwater and present only limited visual intrusion to the natural setting. Floating mariculture processing, caretaker, or other facilities that present significant visual impact will not be sited in this subunit unless there is no feasible, prudent alternative exists. Public mooring buoys will be sited where their use will not be visible from the frequently traveled marine route.

Management Guidelines

Authorization of Tideland Facilities Adjacent to the Proposed USFS Wilderness (Subunits 19A, 19C, 19E, and 19G). This guideline applies to that part of this management unit inside the proposed USFS wilderness area including: 19A, Columbia Bay; 19G, Marine Route; and the parts of 19C, Heather Bay; and 19E, Long Bay. Tideland facilities will be authorized consistent with the recreation, habitat, and wilderness intent for these areas. For this reason, tideland facilities are allowed if they are mostly underwater and cause only limited impact on the unit's fish and wildlife recreation, tourism, and wilderness values. Tideland facilities that present significant long-term visual impact are inconsistent with the wilderness intent and will not be sited in this unit. Tideland authorizations may be issued if the land manager determines no feasible alternative location exists outside this unit and that the public benefits outweigh the impact to the wilderness, fish and wildlife.

Mineral Closures - Estuaries (Subunits 19A, 19C, 19E, and 19G). To protect valuable salmon spawning and rearing habitat and to prevent conflicts with these resources, seven estuaries in this management unit will be closed to new mineral entry. The estuaries

are located in Granite Cove (43), Long Bay (four estuaries, 44-47), Heather Bay (42), and Eickelberg Bay (48). The boundaries of the closures are described in Appendix D.

Visual Protection (Subunits 19A and 19G).

Facilities on state uplands and tidelands, including recreation facilities, will be located and designed to avoid changing the appearance of this subunit. If feasible and prudent alternatives are available, facilities will not be sited where the facility or their use would present noticeable visual impact in either the Columbia Bay (Subunit 19A) or the Marine Route (Subunit 19G). Management tools to accomplish this objective may include

restrictions on location, size, color, material, requirements for vegetative or topographic screening, or other measures as appropriate.

The complete set of guidelines is presented in Chapter 2; any of the guidelines could apply to uses within this management unit. Guidelines that are most likely to apply to this management unit are listed below:

Fish and wildlife habitat and harvest areas
Recreation, tourism, cultural, and scenic
resources

LAND USE DESIGNATION SUMMARY

Management Unit 19: Columbia Glacier

Page 1 of 2

<u>SUBUNIT</u>	<u>LAND OWNERSHIP</u>	<u>LAND USE DESIGNATIONS</u>			<u>COMMENTS</u>
		<u>Primary Surface Use²</u>	<u>Prohibited Surface Use</u>	<u>Subsurface¹</u>	
19A Columbia Bay	State-owned tidelands	Habitat & harvest Public recreation	Commercial recreation facilities Floatlodges Mariculture	Most open; estuary closed	Within USFS proposed wilderness; state selection was relinquished
19B Heather Island	State-owned tidelands	Habitat & harvest Public recreation Shoreline development	Commercial recreation facilities Floatlodges Mariculture	Open	
19C Heather Bay	State-owned tidelands	Habitat & harvest Public recreation Shoreline development	Commercial recreation facilities Floatlodges Mariculture	Most open; estuary closed	Part of subunit within USFS proposed wilderness
19D Glacier Island	State-selected uplands; State-owned tidelands	Habitat & harvest Public recreation	Land offerings Mariculture	Open	
19E Long Bay	State-owned tidelands	Habitat & harvest Public recreation	Commercial recreation facilities Floatlodges	Most open; four estuaries closed	Within USFS proposed wilderness

¹All areas are available for leasing of leasable minerals. Statements of whether or not the unit is open to mineral entry refer only to locatable minerals.

²Other uses such as material sales, land leases, or permits that are not specifically prohibited, may be allowed. Such uses will be allowed if consistent with the management intent statement, management guidelines of this unit, and relevant management guidelines in Chapter 2. See Chapter 2, pages 2-11 and 2-12, for floathome policies. Trapping Cabin and Remote Cabin permits will not be given in the planning area. See guideline B-3, page 2-39.

LAND USE DESIGNATION SUMMARY
Management Unit 19: Columbia Glacier
Page 2 of 2

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		<u>Primary Surface Use²</u>	<u>Prohibited Surface Use</u>	<u>Subsurface¹</u>	
19F Billy's Hole	State-owned tidelands	Habitat & harvest Public recreation	Commercial recreation facilities Floatlodges	Closed	Within USFS proposed wilderness
19G Marine Route	State-owned tidelands	Habitat & harvest Public recreation	Commercial recreation facilities Floatlodges	Most open; estuary closed	Part of subunit within USFS proposed wilderness

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Resource Information Summary (page 1 of 2)¹

Management Unit: 19. Columbia Glacier					
SUBUNIT	Fish & Wildlife²	Recreation	Minerals	Settlement³	Forestry³
19A Columbia Bay (tidelands)	Seal haulouts; Estuary; bear use	Most important scenic area in PWS	No known minerals	--	--
19B Heather Island (tidelands)	Waterfowl concen- trations	Most important scenic area in PWS	No known minerals	--	--
19C Heather Bay (tidelands)	Estuaries; sport fishing; waterfowl; bear use; mountain goat winter range; mountain goat hunting	Recreation; tourism; sport fishing	No known minerals	--	--
19D Glacier Island (uplands and tidelands)	Estuaries; sea lion haulouts; herring spawning; purse hookoffs; deer; commercial fishing; mountain goat winter range; mountain goat hunting	Commercial recreation site	Weakly mineralized	Capable	High/moderate
19E Long Bay (tidelands)	Estuaries; seal haulout; herring spawning; sport fishing; black bear; commercial fishing; mountain goat winter range; mountain goat hunting	Dispersed recreation	Weakly mineralized	--	--
19F Billy's Hole (tidelands)	Estuary; seal haul- out; sport fishing; black bear; mountain goat winter ranges; mountain goat hunting	Sport fishing	Weakly mineralized	--	--

¹ This resource summary describes only the resources for state uplands and tidelands.

² Resource list includes Crucial, Prime, and Important habitats as defined by ADF&G (see Appendix E).
Anadromous fish streams are not listed; they exist in most subunits. See ADF&G anadromous fish stream catalogue.

³ Land offering and timber harvest do not occur on tidelands. Therefore, settlement and forestry resources are not rated for tideland subunits.

Resource Information Summary (page 2 of 2)¹

Management Unit: 19. Columbia Glacier					
SUBUNIT	Fish & Wildlife²	Recreation	Minerals	Settlement³	Forestry³
19G Marine Route (tidelands)	Deer; black bear; commercial fishing mountain goat winter range; mountain goat hunting	Part of frequently used recreation and tourism route between Valdez and Whittier	No known minerals	--	--

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² Resource list includes Crucial, Prime, and Important habitats as defined by ADF&G (see Appendix E). Anadromous fish streams are not listed; they exist in most subunits. See ADF&G anadromous fish stream catalogue.

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