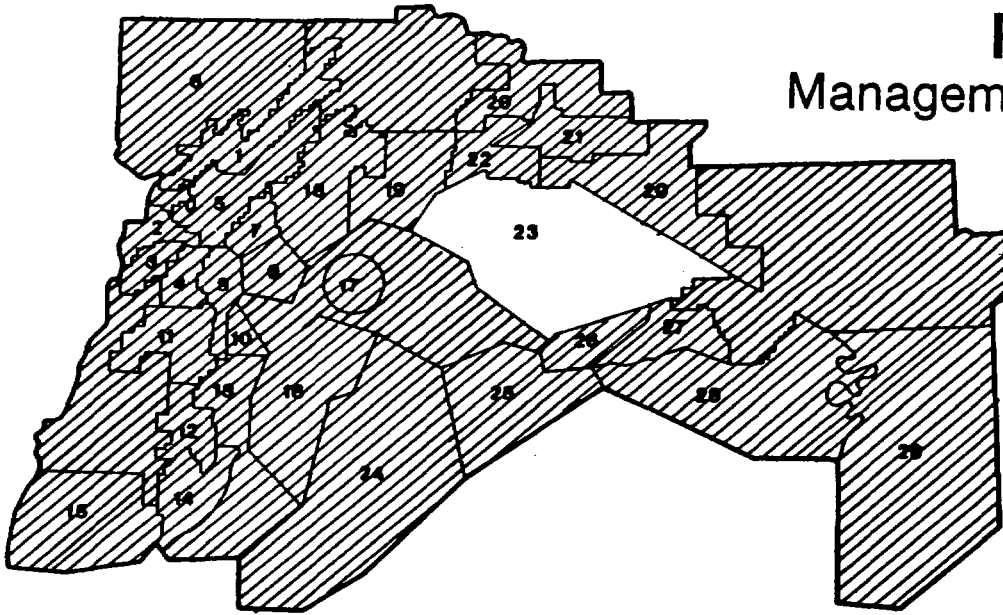


# FIDALGO

## Management Unit 23



### Background

The Fidalgo management unit includes the lands between Tatitlek and Cordova. These lands and waters are used extensively by residents of Valdez, Tatitlek, Cordova, and elsewhere in Alaska.

Most of the coastline in this management unit is privately owned. Three Native Corporations, Tatitlek, Eyak, and Chugach Alaska Corporation have extensive ownership and selections; a few areas are under non-corporate private ownership, mostly patented mining claims. The tidelands at the head of Nelson Bay have been conveyed to Chugach Alaska Corporation. They are the only privately owned tidelands in the Sound. The USFS manages the alpine areas and a few coastal areas within this unit. Two state selections are within this unit: Gravina Point and the head of Port Fidalgo. The latter was relinquished because its purpose, dispersed recreation, can be accommodated under Forest Service management, and because the selection's purpose is not consistent with the USFS interpretation of allowable selection

purposes of section 6(a) of the Statehood Act (see Chapter 5).

Federal land is open to mineral staking. Much of the federal and private land includes significant mineral values.

Extensive timber harvest is likely within the management unit. Native corporations and the USFS plan timber sales in the area. The USFS proposes a timber sale of 20.0 MMBF near St. Matthews and Olsen bays in the early 1990s. Tatitlek Corporation has sold timber harvest rights for its land near Two Moon Bay. Tatitlek's sale includes the timber on most of their land between Port Fidalgo and Port Gravina west of St. Matthews Bay. Eyak Corporation expects to harvest a significant amount of timber on its land that extends from Port Gravina to Cordova. Each timber sale is expected to require log-transfer sites on state tidelands.

The coastline of this unit is extensively used for commercial salmon and herring fishing, hunting, and general recreation by residents

of Tatitlek, Cordova, Valdez, and elsewhere in Alaska. ADF&G estimates that approximately one-third of the pink salmon and one-quarter of the chum salmon wild stocks in Prince William Sound are produced here. The estuaries contain crucial rearing habitat for salmon, herring, and Tanner crab. The villages of Tatitlek and Chenega use these areas for subsistence harvest. Cordova residents often use Sheep and Simpson bays on day trips and on longer trips to Knowles Head for hunting, fishing, and general recreation. Valdez residents often use Galena Bay and Port Fidalgo for the same purposes. Several Anchorage air taxis also operate in the area. The Alaska State Ferry traverses the unit on its way from Valdez to Cordova. Abundant anchorages exist in the unit. These anchorages are important for public use and for the commercial fishing industry. ANCSA 17(b) easements provide important access across private uplands.

State land within this unit supports wildlife habitat of all types including seabirds, waterfowl, land and sea mammals, and a variety of aquatic species. The anadromous fish streams and estuaries support the commercial and sport-fishing industry.

### **Management Intent**

The state tidelands within this unit will be managed for a variety of purposes including resource transfer facilities, community development (Tatitlek), public access, anchorages, mariculture, fish and wildlife habitat and harvest, and maintaining the scenic and recreation resources. Tideland uses should be directed toward areas that are convenient for their purposes and compatible with tideland recreation, tourism, habitat, and harvest resources. When authorizing tideland uses, particular attention will be given to avoiding or minimizing impacts on important commercial and recreational fishing areas, anchorages, public access including 17(b) easements, and scenic resources along the ferry route.

Most state lands in this unit remain open to mineral entry. To protect valuable salmon spawning and rearing habitat and to prevent conflicts with those resources, twenty-four estuaries and one stream will be closed to new mineral entry.

Additional management intent is described below for ten subunits. The intent for **Subunit 23K**, the general use area, is reflected in the previous paragraphs.

**Subunit 23A - Gravina Point.** The state has selected 4,378 acres of uplands as a site for the proposed natural-gas line terminal. The current Yukon-Pacific Trans-Alaska Gas Line proposal identifies the Anderson Bay site near Valdez as preferable to Gravina Point, although Gravina Point is one of the alternative sites being evaluated. If, before 1994, a final site is chosen and it is not Gravina Point, this selection should be relinquished. Before a final decision is known, management should avoid long-term leases that might foreclose the use of this area for TAGS.

The parcel is also in a prominent location along the Valdez-to-Cordova marine route. Permits and leases for state-owned tidelands and uplands within this unit should include measures to protect the scenic natural qualities of the landscape.

**Subunit 23B - Tatitlek and Ellamar.** The primary management intent for the tidelands adjacent to Tatitlek and Ellamar is to aid community development, including the ferry dock planned between the two communities. Shoreline development should be located and designed to conserve herring spawning habitat.

**Subunit 23C - Galena Bay.** This bay provides important community recreation and goat and bear hunting during the summer for Valdez and Tatitlek residents. The area is used by recreationists and by herring kelpers during April and May. Galena Bay is the principal location for the herring pound roe-on-kelp fishery and is an important area for herring spawning and rearing, and salmon

harvest. The Indian and Duck Rivers and their associated estuaries are among the most productive pink and chum salmon habitat in the Fidalgo unit. Humpback whales are reported to feed at Rocky Point and at the mouth of the bay.

Galena Bay uplands are the property of the Tatitlek Corporation. The Bay is also the closest tidewater to the potential hydroelectric site at Silver Lake. If developed, the access and staging area would probably occur near the head of Galena Bay. The Tatitlek Corporation also administers a recreational cabin permit program in Galena Bay.

Management will provide access in support of upland owners' needs. Access will be protected to public tideland resources including: the existing anchorages; fishing and exploring sites on the adjacent tidelands; 17(b) easements; tidelands adjacent to the mouth of anadromous fish streams; and the lagoon at the head of the bay; and herring pounding areas. DNR should avoid authorizations that are not compatible or would block access to the public and private resources.

**Subunit 23D - Two Moon Bay and Snug Corner Cove.** The eastern arm of Two Moon Bay is likely to be required for a log transfer site for Tatitlek Corporation. A site for a log-transfer facility is a priority use within this subunit. Two Moon Bay and Snug Corner Cove contain productive herring and salmon spawning and rearing habitat and important commercial fisheries harvest areas used for herring pounding and seining. The anchorages in the bays are frequently used by the commercial herring fleet, herring pounds, and recreational vessels.

The National Marine Fisheries Service and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game have completed resource inventories and underwater dives in the area. An authorization for a log transfer site and small, inwater log storage area has been given in the eastern arm of Two Moon Bay. An alternative site has been identified on the northern part of the

west shore of Snug Corner Cove. Tideland authorizations should not be given for uses that would disrupt the use of the existing site nor foreclose the opportunity to locate a site at suitable locations within Snug Corner Cove.

**Subunit 23E - St. Matthews and Olsen Bays.** These bays have been identified for log transfer sites by the US Forest Service. The bays also contain productive spawning and rearing habitat for herring and salmon and receive frequent use for purse seine commercial fishing.

The National Marine Fisheries Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game have completed a draft report that documents resource inventories and underwater dives of four sites in St. Matthews Bay and two in Olsen Bay. Tideland authorizations should not foreclose the opportunity to locate a log transfer site at a suitable location in these bays.

Olsen Bay provides important habitat for seasonal waterfowl concentrations. Tideland development should minimize impact to intertidal and wetland vegetation.

**Subunit 23F - Sport-Fishing Sites.** Hells Hole, Beartrap Bay, Saline Creek, Simpson Creek, and Hole in the Wall are all important commercial fishing, sport-fishing and public recreation sites surrounded by Native-owned or -selected land. Only Beartrap Bay has some adjacent public land. They also include productive spawning and rearing habitat for salmon and herring. These sites are used frequently by residents of Cordova and Valdez. Collectively they are some of the most important sport destinations for those communities. Hells Hole is frequently used for floatplane drop-offs.

Management will protect access to the existing anchorages, public fishing and exploring sites on the adjacent tidelands, 17(b) easements, and the tidelands adjacent to the mouth of anadromous fish streams. DNR should avoid authorizations that would block

access or impact these resources if a prudent and feasible alternative exists.

**Subunit 23G - Heads of Port Fidalgo and Port Gravina.** The heads of Port Fidalgo and Port Gravina are the only areas between Cordova and Tatitlek that are surrounded by public uplands not currently proposed for timber harvest. An excellent anchorage exists at the head of Port Fidalgo. The lagoon at the head of Port Fidalgo is entered by a hiking trail along the narrows or by skiffs at slack tide. The tideflats at the head of both bays are important for their estuarine habitat and the habitat they provide for seasonal concentrations of waterfowl. Although no USFS timber harvest is proposed for this area, timber harvest may be allowed after completion of the Gravina Management Area analysis (the USFS management plan for the area).

State management of tidelands within this unit will emphasize fish and wildlife habitat and harvest and public recreation including protection of the intertidal waterfowl habitat and public access to the Port Fidalgo anchorage, the hiking trail, and portage trails. Tideland authorizations should not be given for uses for which a feasible and prudent alternative exists and that will diminish the capacity of the anchorage, the natural appearance of Port Fidalgo lagoon, block access to the trails, or disrupt patterns of public use of the area.

**Subunit 23H - Irish Cove and Goose Island.** The uplands in this management unit are owned by The Tatitlek Corporation. The tideland areas of these management units are important for salmon rearing and seasonal concentrations of waterfowl. Tideland management should provide upland access while minimizing impact on the intertidal vegetation used by the waterfowl.

**Subunit 23I - Sheep and Simpson Bays.** These bays receive frequent day and overnight use by residents of Cordova for sport fishing, hunting, hiking, and exploring. They contain frequently used anchorages and received concentrated use by commercial purse seine

fishermen. The tideland areas contain a variety of wildlife including otters, deer, and bear. A variety of waterfowl concentrate in the areas seasonally and use them for nesting and molting. The intertidal and estuarine areas in this unit are particularly important for waterfowl. Tideland authorizations should minimize impacts on these habitats.

The uplands surrounding the state tidelands are owned by Eyak Corporation. One or more sites for log-transfer facilities are likely to be required on the state tidelands. The opportunity to locate sites within this area will be maintained. Long-term authorizations that would foreclose the opportunity in likely sites should not be given for uses for which a feasible and prudent alternative exists. Log-transfer facilities should be combined into as few sites as is feasible. When siting these facilities on state tidelands several factors should be considered: economic and site feasibility and convenience for the facility; the effect on the wildlife resources; effect on public access to anchorages, trails, and 17(b) easements; and the visual effects, especially as seen from the well-traveled tourist and recreation route followed by the state ferry.

**Subunit 23J - Landlocked Bay.** This subunit is an important commercial harvest area and a sport fishing site. Resource transfer sites may also be required. Upland access will be located and designed to minimize or avoid conflicts with the established sport and commercial fishing uses.

## Management Guidelines

**Other sites for resource-transfer facilities (all subunits).** Throughout this management unit, tideland sites may be needed for resource transfer facilities. Examples of where access may be needed include the shoreline between Rocky Point and Ellamar, the shoreline of Bligh and Bushby islands, Port Fidalgo including Fish and Whalen Bays, Port Gravina including Parsha's Bay and Comfort Cove, Sheep Point, and Nelson Bay. Approval and final siting will be worked out on a case-

by-case basis consistent with the management intent and guidelines of this unit and of Chapter 2.

**Mineral Closures - Estuaries (all subunits except 23J and 23K).** To protect valuable salmon spawning and rearing habitat and to prevent conflicts with these resources, twenty-four estuaries, approximately 1.5 miles of Pass Creek in Subunit 23A, and the state uplands within 50 feet of each side of that part of the creek, will be closed to new mineral entry. The boundaries of the closures are discussed in Appendix D.

**Visual Protection Along the Ferry Route (Subunits 23A, 23H, and 23K).** Uses of the state tidelands that would significantly change the natural appearance of the shoreline should avoid locating along the tourist and recreation route followed by the state ferry. A use may be located on state tidelands along this route if no practical alternative exists or if the operating and design techniques can

adequately minimize the visual impact. Techniques to accomplish this task include buffering the use by topography or vegetation, using colors similar to its surroundings, or other techniques as appropriate. This guideline applies to state tidelands at Rocky Point, the outside of Bligh and Goose islands, Knowles Head and Knowles Bay, Gravina Point, and Sheep Point.

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

- Fish and wildlife habitat and harvest areas
- Forestry
- Mariculture
- Recreation, tourism, cultural and scenic resources
- Shoreline development

# LAND USE DESIGNATION SUMMARY

## Management Unit 23: Fidalgo

Page 1 of 2

SUBUNIT	LAND OWNERSHIP	LAND USE DESIGNATIONS			COMMENTS
		Primary Surface Use <sup>2</sup>	Prohibited Surface Use	Subsurface <sup>1</sup>	
23A Port Gravina	State-selected uplands; state-owned tidelands	Resource management, high value	Land offerings	Most open; Pass Creek and estuary closed	Potential TAGS terminal site; may be relinquished if alternative site is chosen
23B Tatitlek Ellamar	State-owned tidelands	Shoreline development		Most open; estuary closed	
23C Galena Bay	State-owned tidelands	Habitat & harvest Public recreation Shoreline development		Most open; two estuaries closed	
23D Two Moon Bay; Snug Corner Cove	State-owned tidelands	Forestry Habitat & harvest		Estuary closed	Log transfer sites may be needed
23E St. Matthews; Olsen Cove	State-owned tidelands	Forestry Habitat & harvest		Most open; two estuaries closed	Log transfer sites may be needed
23F Sport fishing sites	State-owned tidelands	Habitat & harvest Public recreation		Most open; two estuaries closed	

<sup>1</sup>All 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.

<sup>2</sup>Other 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 23: Fidalgo

Page 2 of 2

<u>SUBUNIT</u>	<u>LAND OWNERSHIP</u>	<u>LAND USE DESIGNATIONS</u>			<u>COMMENTS</u>
		<u>Primary Surface Use<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>Prohibited Surface Use</u>	<u>Subsurface<sup>1</sup></u>	
23G Head of Port Fidalgo/ Gravina	State-owned tidelands	Habitat & harvest Public recreation		Estuary closed	State selection was relinquished
23H Irish Cove and Goose Island	State-owned tidelands	Habitat & harvest		Most open; estuary closed	
23I Sheep and Simpson Bays	State-owned tidelands	Forestry Habitat & harvest Public recreation		Most open; two estuaries closed	Log transfer sites may be needed
23J Landlocked Bay	State-owned tidelands	Forestry Habitat & harvest		Estuary closed	Resource transfer sites may be needed
23K Remainder of Unit	State-owned tidelands	General Use		Most open; twelve estuaries closed	Log transfer sites may be needed

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**Resource Information Summary** (page 1 of 3)<sup>1</sup>

<b>Management Unit: 23. Fidalgo</b>					
<b>SUBUNIT</b>	<b>Fish &amp; Wildlife<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Recreation</b>	<b>Minerals</b>	<b>Settlement<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Forestry<sup>3</sup></b>
23A Gravina Point (uplands and tidelands)	Estuaries; seals; otters; bird rook- ery; deer; purse- seine hookoffs; bear and goat hunting; commercial fishing	Dispersed rec- reation; scenic area along marine route	No known minerals	--	--
23B Tatitlek, Ellamar (tidelands)	Estuaries; otters; herring spawning; purse-seine hook- offs; two bird rookeries; commercial fishing	Dispersed recreation	Highly mineralized	--	--
23C Galena Bay (tidelands)	Estuaries; bird rookery; seasonal waterfowl concentra- tions; herring spawn- ing; purse-seine hookoffs; whales; bear use; deer; mountian goat hunting; commercial fishing	Frequent use to and from Valdez and Tatitlek; anch- orage	No known minerals	--	--
23D Two Moon Bay, Snug Corner Cove (tidelands)	Estuaries; otters; herring spawning; mountain goat hunting; commercial fishing	Dispersed recreation	No known minerals	--	--

<sup>1</sup> This resource summary describes only the resources for state uplands and tidelands.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> 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 3)<sup>1</sup>

Management Unit: 23. Fidalgo					
SUBUNIT	Fish & Wildlife <sup>2</sup>	Recreation	Minerals	Settlement <sup>3</sup>	Forestry <sup>3</sup>
23E St. Matthews, Olsen Bay (tidelands)	Estuaries; seasonal waterfowl concentrations; herring spawning; purse-seine hookoffs; mountain goat winter range; sport fishing; bear hunting; commercial fishing	Dispersed recreation	No known minerals	--	--
23F Sport Fishing Sites (tidelands)	Estuaries; seals; otters; seasonal waterfowl concentrations; bear use; herring spawning; sport fishing; bear hunting; other concentrations; commercial fishing	Frequent use to and from Valdez and Cordova; anchorages; floatplane drop off (Hell's Hole)	No known minerals	--	--
23G Head of Port Fidalgo and Port Gravina (tidelands)	Estuaries; seals; essential waterfowl; habitat; seasonal waterfowl concentrations; bear use; bear hunting; herring spawning; commercial fishing	Excellent anchorage - Port Fidalgo; hiking	No known minerals	--	--
23H Irish Cove and Goose Island, (tidelands)	Estuaries; otters; bird rookery; essential waterfowl habitat; seasonal waterfowl concentrations; herring spawning; bear use; commercial fishing	Dispersed recreation	No known minerals	--	--

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**Resource Information Summary (page 3 of 3)<sup>1</sup>**

<b>Management Unit: 23. Fidalgo</b>					
<b>SUBUNIT</b>	<b>Fish &amp; Wildlife<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Recreation</b>	<b>Minerals</b>	<b>Settlement<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Forestry<sup>3</sup></b>
23I Sheep and Simpson Bays (tidelands)	Estuaries; seals; otters; two bird rookeries; essen- tial waterfowl hab- itat; seasonal water- fowl concentrations; bear use; deer; herring spawning; mountain goat winter range; otter concent- rations; commercial fishing	Frequent day and overnight use from Cor- dova; hiking	No known minerals	-	--
23J Remainder of Unit (tidelands)	Estuaries; seals; otters; seasonal waterfowl concentra- tions; bear use; deer; herring spawn- ing; purse-seine hook- offs; commercial fishing	Dispersed recreation	No known minerals	--	--

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