Unit 12b - Benjamin Island

Background

Existing Uses and Authorizations. The Sentinel Island navigation light in Subunit 12b27 is still active, but unmanned. There is an abandoned dock on east side of the island.

Fish and Wildlife. Benjamin Island (Subunit 12b7) is a major Steller sea lion haulout. The Steller sea lion has been emergency-listed as threatened in Alaska. The Steller sea lion recovery plan (1991) developed under the Endangered Species Act recommend designating critical habitat including the beaches and adjacent waters around major haulouts such as Benjamin Island. Benjamin Island has supported as many as 227 sea lions at one time (Steller Sea Lion Recovery Plan, recommendations for critical habitat for Steller sea lions, April 1991). The primary sea lion haulout on Benjamin Island is on the northwest shore. However, sea lions use the entire periphery of the island.

Recreation. Benjamin Island was selected by the state from the USFS because of its community recreation values (NFCG 319). Tidelands on the north and south ends of Benjamin Island are used as anchorages. Local residents skiff and kayak to Benjamin Island to picnic, camp, and view and photograph the sea lions. Guided kayak and camping trips to the island started in 1992. Benjamin Island, Subunit 12b7, has a good beach on the south end of the island for camping. In Subunit 12b26, the uplands of Benjamin Island, there is a hiking trail through the forest, starting on the south end of the island. In Subunit 12b3, there is camping on the uplands of North Island.

Management Intent

Benjamin Island and adjacent tidelands and submerged lands will be managed for protection of the Steller sea lion haulout and associated habitat while providing opportunities for dispersed recreation and fish and wildlife harvest of which the subunits in this unit are co-designated.

Benjamin Island and adjacent tidelands and submerged lands have in the past been proposed for inclusion in the Juneau Channel Islands State Marine Park. If not designated as part of the state park, the land will be managed consistent with the designations and guidelines in this plan. If designated as a state park, these areas will be managed by DPOR consistent with the enabling legislation for this park and other applicable state park statutes and regulations.

Management Guidelines

Sea Lions. To protect the Steller sea lions, all of North Island and Benjamin Island, and areas that extend 3,000 feet seaward from the haulouts are designated as buffer zones. Prior to authorizing activities within 3,000 feet of North Island and Benjamin Island, DNR will consult with ADFG and NMFS. Measures will be taken to avoid significant adverse impacts to the sea lions.

Subunit 12b27 includes the historic Sentinel Island lighthouse. The State Office of History and Archaeology will be consulted prior to authorizations in this subunit.

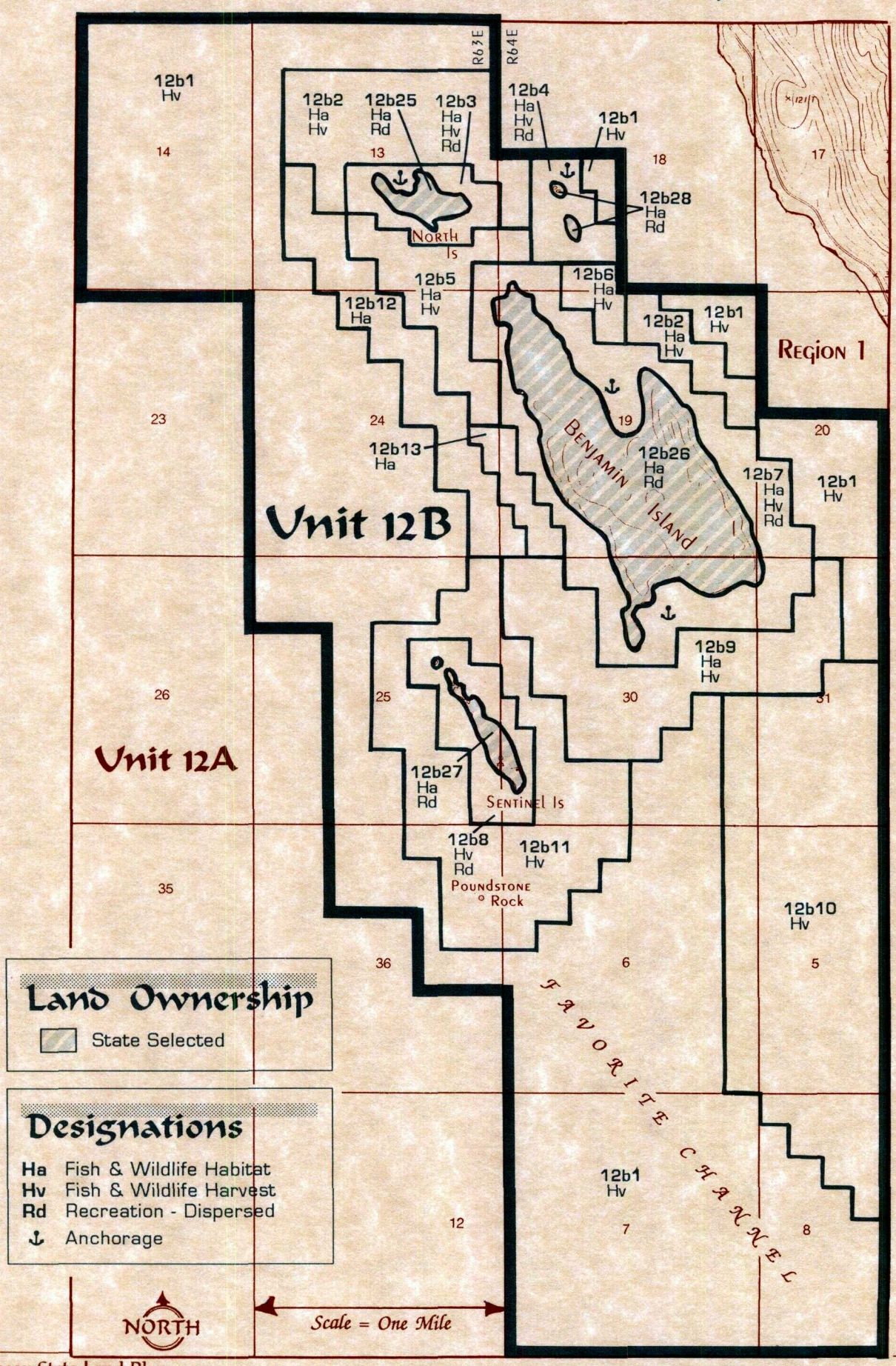
Recreation Leasing. Commercial recreation facilities are an allowable use on state lands in this management unit. At North Island and Benjamin Island, facilities for day-use wildlife observation and education activities are allowed subject to the sea lion protection provisions in the federal Endangered Species Act. At Sentinel Island, facilities may include overnight ac-

commodations (such as lodges, camps, or cabins), or facilities that provide food service, wildlife viewing, education, or associated access (such as boat floats, docks, or ramps). The .073 commercial recreation leasing process will be used for proposed facilities on the islands in this unit. See also *Land Management Consolidation Proposals* in Chapter 4.[20]

Land-Use Designation Summary

For keys to the one-letter and two-letter abbreviations used in this table, see the beginning of this chapter.

UNIT 12B: BENJAMIN ISLAND						
Area no. & name	DNR designation	CBJ zoning district	Land type	Adjacent ownership	Resource or use	Other comments
12b1	Hv	RR	SU	State	King crab commercial and personal use harvest	
12b2	Ha Hv	RR	SU	State	Within 3,000' of a seal lion haul-out; salmon sportfishing	
12b3 North Island	Ha Hv Rd	RR	T	State	Sea lion haul-out; salmon sportfishing; Dungeness crab commercial harvest; anchorage	Previously proposed as a Marine Park
12b4	Ha Hv Rd	RR	T	State	Within 3,000' of a sea lion haul-out; anchorage; salmon sportfishing; harbor seal haul-out	Previously proposed as a Marine Park
12b5	Ha Hv	RR	T	State	Sea lion haul-out; salmon sportfishing; Dungeness crab commercial harvest	
12b6	Ha Hv	RR	T	State	Salmon sportfishing; sea lion haul-out	
12b7 Benjamin Island	Ha Hv Rd	RR	T	State	River otter habitat; sea lion haul-out; salmon and halibut sportfishing; Dungeness crab commercial harvest; anchorage	Previously proposed as a Marine Park
12b8 Sentinel Island	Hv Rd	RR	T	State	Salmon sport harvest	Previously proposed as a Marine Park
12b9	Ha Hv	RR	SU	State	Within 3,000' of a sea lion haul-out; salmon sport harvest	
12b10	Hv	RR	SU	State	Halibut sportfishing	
12b11	Hv	RR	SU	State	Salmon sportfishing	
12b12	Ha	RR	SU	State	Within 3,000' of a sea lion haul-out	
12b13	Ha	RR	SU	State	Within 3,000' of a sea lion haul-out	
12b25 North Island	Ha Rd	RR	UP	State	Sea lion haul-out along shoreline	Previously proposed as a Marine Park
12b26 Benjamin Island	Ha Rd	RR	UP	State	Sea lion haul-out along shoreline; river otter habitat	Previously proposed as a Marine Park
12b27 Sentinel Island	Ha Rd	RR	UP	State	Within 3,000' of a sea lion haul-out	Previously proposed as a Marine Park
12b28	Ha Rd	RR	UP	State	Within 3,000' of a sea lion haul-out; harbor seal haul-out	Previously proposed as a Marine Park

20 For additional information about commercial recreation leasing, see Chapter 2, *Recreation, Tourism, and Scenic Resources* section.

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