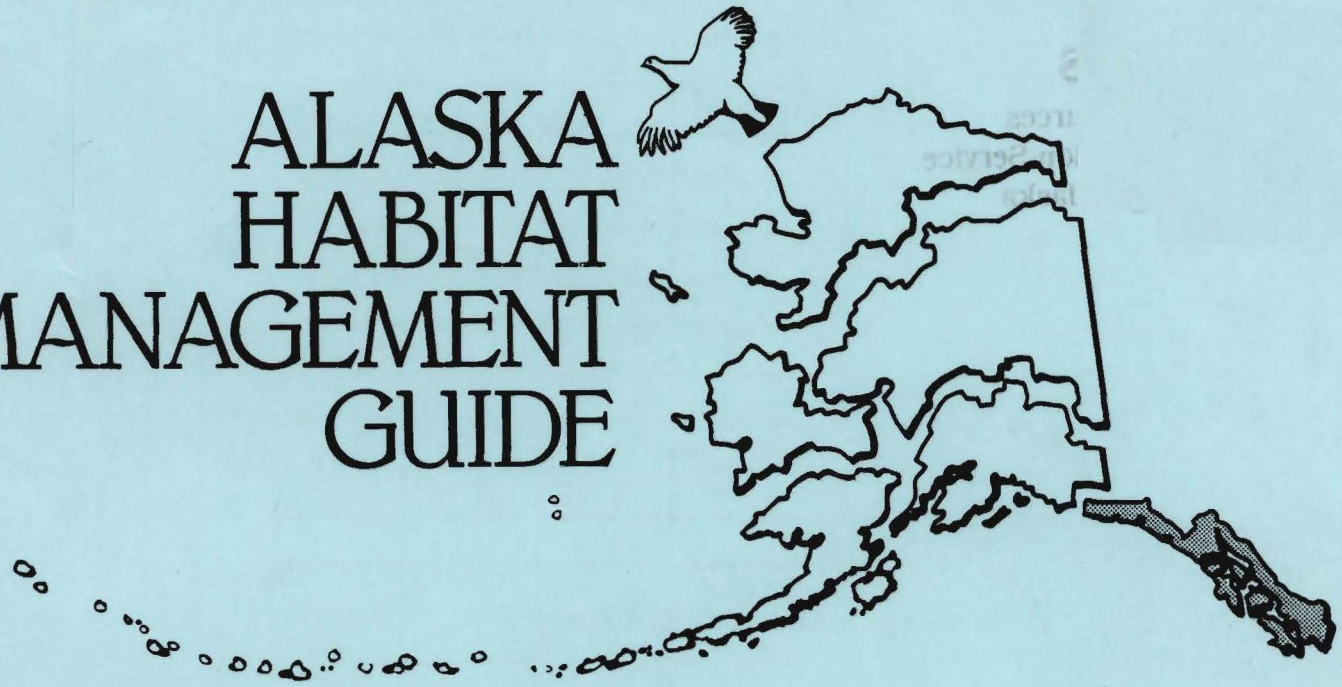
ALASKA HABITAT MANAGEMENT GUIDE



SOUTHEAST REGION: SELECTED HISTORICAL ACCESS TO FISH AND WILDLIFE

Departmental Review Draft

Produced by
State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Division of Habitat

Juneau, Alaska
1986

Southeast Region:
Selective Historical Access to Fish and Wildlife

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Many individuals have been involved in the production of this database on historical access in Southeast Alaska, either as production staff or as sources of information. Those persons who contributed source information, without whom this project would not have been possible, are listed in the reference section at the back of this volume.

The following lists the production team and the portion of the access volume for which they are responsible:

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Juanita Henderson and Susan Grainger were responsible for typing this document.

Overview of Habitat Management Guides Project

Background

Alaska is an immense and bountiful frontier, and until just recently it was all but inconceivable that we would ever need to worry about its capacity to sustain the wealth of fish and wildlife resources for which it is renowned. But the impetus of progress has not abated, and the pressure to develop our lands and waters intensifies daily. Every year more lands in Alaska are being proposed for uses other than as wildlife habitat, especially around cities, towns, and villages. These proposed uses include logging, mining, hydroelectric projects, agriculture, settlement, geothermal development, and oil and gas leases, among others. As the number of proposals and plans for development continues to increase, so does the need to carefully and efficiently evaluate their possible effects upon species and habitats, and human uses of fish and wildlife, and to recommend viable managerial options to guarantee that our valuable fish and wildlife resources and habitats are adequately protected and maintained. By using appropriate planning and managerial techniques most of the potential for damage and loss of access for human use can be avoided.

One of the responsibilities of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) is to assist land managers by recommending to them the best ways and means, based upon the best available data, for protecting local fish, wildlife, and habitats against adverse effects and impacts. Because many proposals and plans for development and land uses require a rapid response from the department, there may not be enough time for staff to actually study the specific area in which the proposed development is to occur. However, the department initiated the Alaska Habitat Management Guides (AHMG) project to prepare reports of the kinds of information upon which its recommendations must be founded in order to responsibly and rapidly address land and water use proposals made by land managers. These guides are a major undertaking and will be of inestimable value to the state in its efforts to avoid or mitigate adverse impacts to Alaska's great wealth of fish and wildlife.

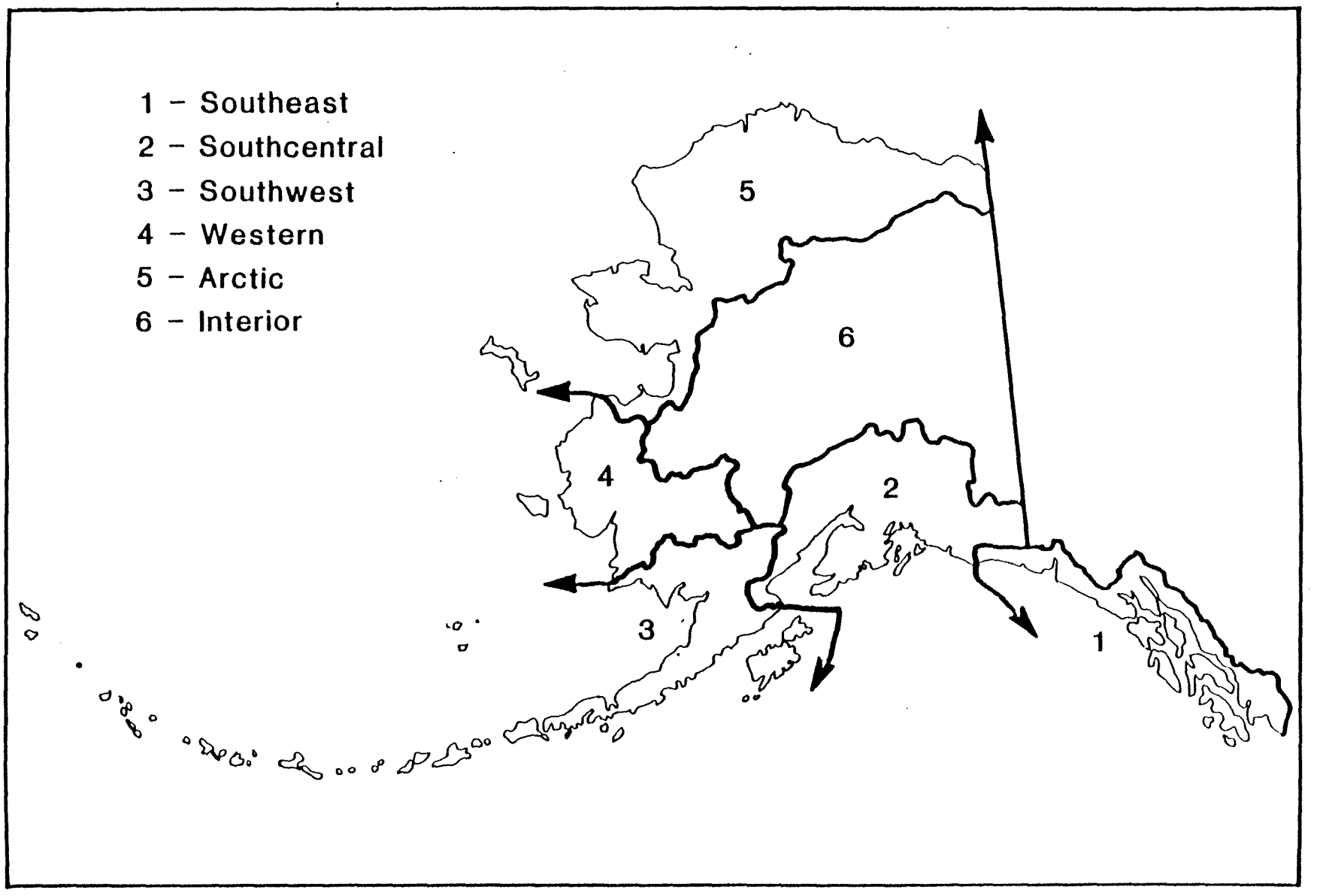
Purpose

The AHMG present the best available information on selected fish and wildlife species: mapping and discussing their geographical distribution; assessing their relative abundance; describing their life functions and habitat requirements; identifying the human uses made of them, including harvest patterns of rural communities and access to fish and wildlife; and describing their role in the state's economy. This last kind of information, because of the variety of values humans place upon fish and wildlife, is not easily derived. There are, however, several methods to estimate some of the economic values associated with these resources, and such estimates

have become particularly important in land use planning because many potentially conflicting uses must be evaluated in economic terms.

Essential to assessing what might happen to fish and wildlife if their habitats are altered is information about what effects or impacts are typically associated with particular kinds of developmental activities. The habitat management guides therefore also provide summaries of these known effects. This information, in conjunction with compiled life history information, will allow those concerned to estimate how sensitive a given species might be to a specific proposed activity - whether or not, and to what degree, the fish and wildlife are liable to be impacted. The guidance offered (a compilation of existing options for habitat management) is not site-specific. Rather, it is general information available to those who seek to avoid adverse impacts without placing undue restraints upon other land and water uses.

The completed guides coverage of fish and wildlife resources encompasses the Fish and Game Resource Management Regions established by the Joint Board of Fisheries and Game (map 1). These regions provide the most inclusive and consistent format for presenting information about fish and wildlife resources and relating it to management activities and data collection efforts within the department.



Map 1. The six regions of the Alaska Habitat Management Guides.

SOUTHEAST REGION: SELECTIVE HISTORICAL ACCESS TO FISH AND WILDLIFE

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Objectives

These maps and matrices have been compiled as part of the Alaska Habitat Management Guides project to identify patterns of access used by the public to fish and wildlife resources in Southeast Alaska. The data contained in these products are intended for use by the Department of Fish and Game in conjunction with species distribution and harvest maps and narratives to provide a more complete picture of known current and past access patterns. It is important to note that these products document access as it has historically occurred in the region and have not been edited in terms of factors such as land ownership, legality of access, etc. It was felt that a realistic view of fish and wildlife use in this region depended upon maps showing, insofar as possible, actual patterns of public access to fish and wildlife. For these reasons, it should be clearly understood that the products presented here lend no authority for the public use of any of the routes or points shown. It remains the responsibility of users to obtain the appropriate authorizations for use of lands traversed by access routes.

These access maps are intended to be used in conjunction with maps and narratives about the distribution, abundance, and human use of fish and wildlife to provide a more complete picture of known current and past access patterns for land use planning and land management. See the Alaska Habitat Management Guides, Reference Maps, Southeast Region (Division of Habitat 1986) and Doerr and Sigman (1986).

These access maps are also intended to be used in conjunction with Forest Service (FS) maps depicting locations of public cabins, developed campgrounds, trails, anchor buoys, float docks, and roads. The location of these facilities and the status of roads (e.g., planned, constructed, all-weather, maintained, or put-to-bed) were digitized during winter and spring of 1986. The access maps included here were designed to avoid duplication of FS facility and road mapping, except where information on known use of specific areas for hunting and trapping was available (e.g., FS cabins known to be used for hunting certain game species were mapped; logging roads, however, were generally not mapped due to the lack of information on use of specific logging roads). The FS maps will be supplied upon request at a variety of map scales from the Engineering and Aviation Management Program, Forest Service Region 10, P.O. Box 1628, Juneau, Alaska.

B. Organization of Information

Types of access data presented here include access sites used for hunting, fishing, trapping, or nonconsumptive use of fish and wildlife.

The access sites are mapped on 1:250,000-scale USGS quad maps. The maps are in alphabetical order based on U.S. Geological Survey quad names, as follows (see map 2):

Atlin
Bradfield Canal
Craig
Dixon Entrance
Icy Bay
Juneau
Ketchikan
Mt. Fairweather
Mt. St. Elias
Petersburg
Port Alexander
Prince Rubert
Sitka
Skagway
Sumdum
Taku River
Yakutat

The map series is also available in the Southeast offices of the Division of Habitat as acetate overlays. These clear overlays can more easily be used in conjunction with other mapped information.

C. Qualifications/Limitations of Information

Several factors should be kept in mind when reviewing the information contained on the 18 maps. The access sites and routes included on the maps represent only those sites that either 1) ADF&G area management biologists in the Division of Game in Southeast Alaska knew were currently in use for access to hunting or trapping areas, or 2) were identified in the Recreational fisheries of Southeast Alaska, including Yakutat: an assessment (Schwan et al. 1984).

Certain types of facilities or site characteristics that help provide access to fish and wildlife were not mapped because of time constraints. Department area management staff, fish and wildlife users, air charter operators, and hunting, fishing, and natural history guides may be able to provide additional information on the following:

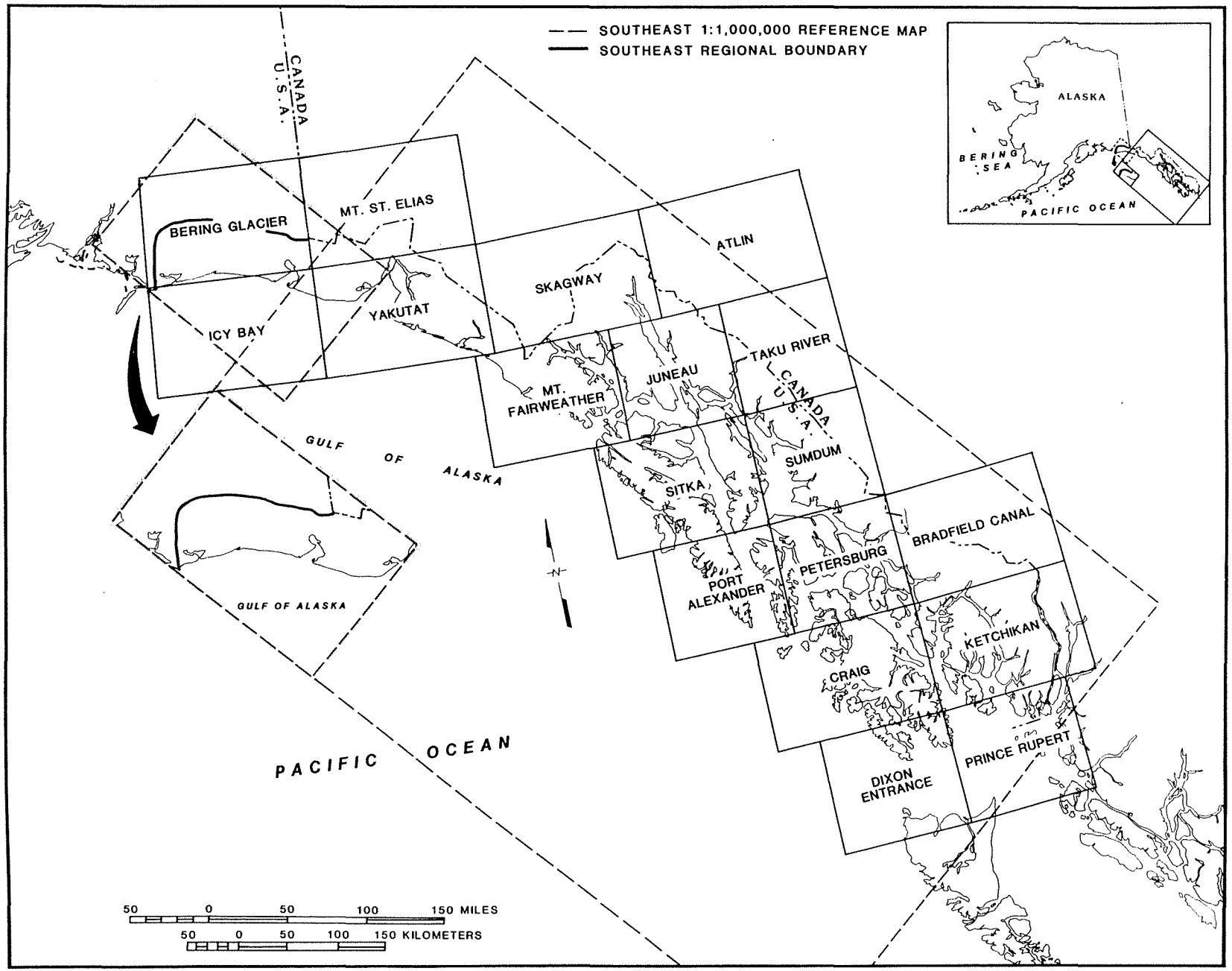
° Areas of access for freshwater fishing

° Boat anchorages for commercial fishing and sportfishing

° Small boat harbors

° Marine boat launch areas

° Areas of access for nonconsumptive uses of fish and wildlife



Map 2. Southeast Region showing 1:250,000-scale quadrangle locations.

The land status of each access site was not incorporated into these descriptions. Public access may or may not be allowed at the present time, depending upon the policies of the landowner. Land status within much of the State of Alaska is currently undergoing considerable change. Users should consult with the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR) and the U.S. Forest Service (FS) regarding the current land status of access sites identified in this volume and should also consult with the present landowner or land manager regarding allowed access. It remains the responsibility of users to obtain the appropriate authorizations for use of lands traversed by historical access routes.

The mapped locations of the identified access sites and routes indicate only the general location and should not be used for navigational purposes. This access information is intended to be used for land management and planning, not as a travel guide to reach fish and wildlife. The general locations of the sites, trails, and water routes are based on the knowledge of ADF&G area biologists as they examined U.S. Geological Survey topographic maps. The biologists did their best to accurately portray the locations of such features as trails and the point location of airstrips and unimproved airplane landing areas. The ADF&G disclaims any responsibility for claims resulting from errors contained in the access information in this volume. The department advises users of this volume to check with local sources for more site-specific information.

Species distribution maps could be used to evaluate the presence of other species in an area. Omission from the maps of target species that users were seeking indicates that none of the sources mentioned it, not that the species is unused (if it is present). The species listed were recalled from memory, without the benefit of a species checklist.

II. METHODS

The purpose of mapping historical access to wildlife was to compile information on the accessibility and use of specific areas that was more detailed than harvest statistics from Division of Game harvest reporting units. Because road access is limited in the Southeast region and vehicle use (i.e., off-road vehicle use) is restricted on remote logging roads, access is primarily marine in nature. Marine access sites (i.e., anchorages, protected waters around communities) are important in terms of the upland areas thus made accessible to hunters. This mapping is not intended to delineate actual use areas but to indicate facilities or other site characteristics that provide access.

Marine day-use sportfishing areas (Schwan et al. 1984) were also mapped as indicators of areas generally accessible from major communities by recreational boats on a day-use basis.

A. Definitions

The following definitions were used to guide the source people in mapping access.

1. Boat launch - developed landings or launch areas known to be habitually used by hunters or trappers for putting recreational boats into lakes or streams.

2. Floatplane landing area - lake, stream, river, or coastal marine waters that are known to be habitually used for floatplane access to wildlife resources. Additional areas are undoubtedly used for floatplane access to fish and wildlife.

3. Guide camp - area known to be used as base camp for guided hunts. (Note: Mapping of these facilities was limited by the knowledge of the individuals involved and thus is likely incomplete. No endorsement or promotion of specific commercial uses by the ADF&G is intended.)

4. Marine anchorage - mooring locations known to be habitually used by recreational boaters for protection from the weather and/or for offloading skiffs, which are taken to shore for access to wildlife resources.

5. Marine boat access - beaches known to be used by hunters for landing skiffs or small boats to hunt particular species.

6. Marine day-use sportfishing area - marine areas known to be generally accessible for one-day trips from Southeast Alaska population centers and where major marine recreational fisheries are known to occur.

7. Permanent campsite - area with permitted permanent tent frame or other facility known to be used as base camp for hunting or trapping.

8. Remote cabin - remote public or privately owned cabin known to be used by hunters or trappers.

9. Road - improved, regularly maintained route known to be habitually used for access to lands and/or waters supporting wildlife resources. A stretch of road is included only if hunting occurs from it or if highway vehicles are known to park along it to start using another mode of access (e.g., foot, ATV, horse, boat) to reach wildlife resources.

10. Trail - improved or minimally maintained route known to be habitually used by hunters or trappers for foot access to wildlife resources.

11. Freshwater route - rivers, streams, and lakes known to be habitually used for motorboat, canoe, raft, or kayak travel for the purpose of using wildlife resources.

12. Wheeled airplane landing area - improved or minimally maintained airstrips or unimproved areas known to be habitually used for airplane access to wildlife resources. Additional wheel plane landing areas that were not mapped include sand bars, beaches, and flat areas.

B. Species codes

Bl - Black bear

Br - Brown bear

D - Sitka black-tailed deer

F - Furbearers

G - Mountain goat

M - Moose

U - Upland game birds (ptarmigan, grouse)

W - Waterfowl

C. Procedures

Area game management biologists were the primary sources of the mapped information on access to wildlife resources. Specifically, biologists were asked to map areas known to be used for hunting and trapping access due to the presence of specific facilities or site access characteristics. Because of the absence of reliable data on the relative intensity of use (i.e., number of users or user-days) of specific areas, known use by one or more individuals was the criterion for the mapping. All area biologists noted, however, that hunting access by commercial fishermen was dispersed much more widely throughout the region than indicated on the maps, because of the increased mobility afforded by vessels larger than those generally used for recreation, but that specific information on these more remote use areas is lacking. Marine day-use sport-fishing areas were mapped based on Schwan et al. (1984).

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