

HB

91

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA

BILL NO. HB91

1995 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Revision Date: Original Dept Affected: Natural Resources
 Title: An Act amending the area within designated BRU: Parks & Recreation Management
marine park units of the Alaska state park system, and adding marine.. Component: Parks Management
 Sponsor: Representative Robinson and Elton
 Requestor: _____ Component Serial No. 452

Expenditures/Revenues	(Thousands of Dollars)					
OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY96	FY97	FY98	FY99	FY00	FY01
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
CHANGE IN REVENUES ()	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

FUND SOURCE	(Thousands of Dollars)					
1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF						
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1006 GF/MHTIA						
Other						
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY95) cost: \$ None

POSITIONS						
FULL-TIME	0	0	0	0	0	0
PART-TIME	0	0	0	0	0	0
TEMPORARY	0	0	0	0	0	0

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

Existing recreation use leaves trash and starts duff fires from poor fire site choice. Parks staff can assist in minor signing of boat launches and heavy use areas to encourage park visitors to take out trash and use good fire pits. Signage and occasional patrols can be done with no additional funding. Fire fighting is done by the U.S. Forest Service under statewide agreement. Volunteer groups have indicated their willingness to assist in trash clean-up.

Prepared by: Neil Johannsen, Director *Neil* Phone: 762-2600
 Division: Parks & Outdoor Recreation Date: 5-Feb-95
 Approved by Commissioner: *Neil* Date: 3/6/95
 Agency: Natural Resources

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Alaska State Legislature

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



REPRESENTATIVE CAREN ROBINSON

SPONSOR STATEMENT

HB 91

House Bill 91 designates 13 islands in the Juneau area as a State Marine Park. The islands included in this parcel are located in Lynn Canal. The lands are currently held in public domain; none are under private ownership. These lands have been determined as unsuitable for real estate or resource development.

In 1977 the islands were nominated for selection by the City and Borough of Juneau for recreation purposes. In 1989 the State selected the Channel Islands from the federal government under the Alaska Statehood Act. Designation of these lands requires legislative action. Both the City and the State have identified protection of the islands as a priority in the Juneau Coastal Management Plan and the Juneau State Land Plan. A previous bill, introduced during the last legislative session, passed the House only to die in the State Rules Committee.

Establishing the lands as a state park would preserve the quality of existing and future recreational use. All existing lawful uses, including fishing, trapping and hunting are preserved under statute. The boundaries of the park would be at the 20-fathom line around each island. It is essential to institute a management system to preserve the existing recreational use and to accommodate future needs. Only State Park management can consolidate water, intertidal and upland uses into a single entity with adequate enforcement authority to protect as well as provide for safe use of these resources.

Creation of the Juneau Channel Islands State Marine Park is urgently needed and would be an outstanding addition to Alaska State Parks by providing an island complex unique to the State Park System.

Thank you for your consideration. I urge your support of House Bill 91.

SPONSOR STATEMENT

State Capitol Room 114
Juneau, AK 99801-0182

(907) 465-3744
Fax 465-6790



JUNEAU CHANNEL ISLANDS A STATE MARINE PARK PROPOSAL 1994

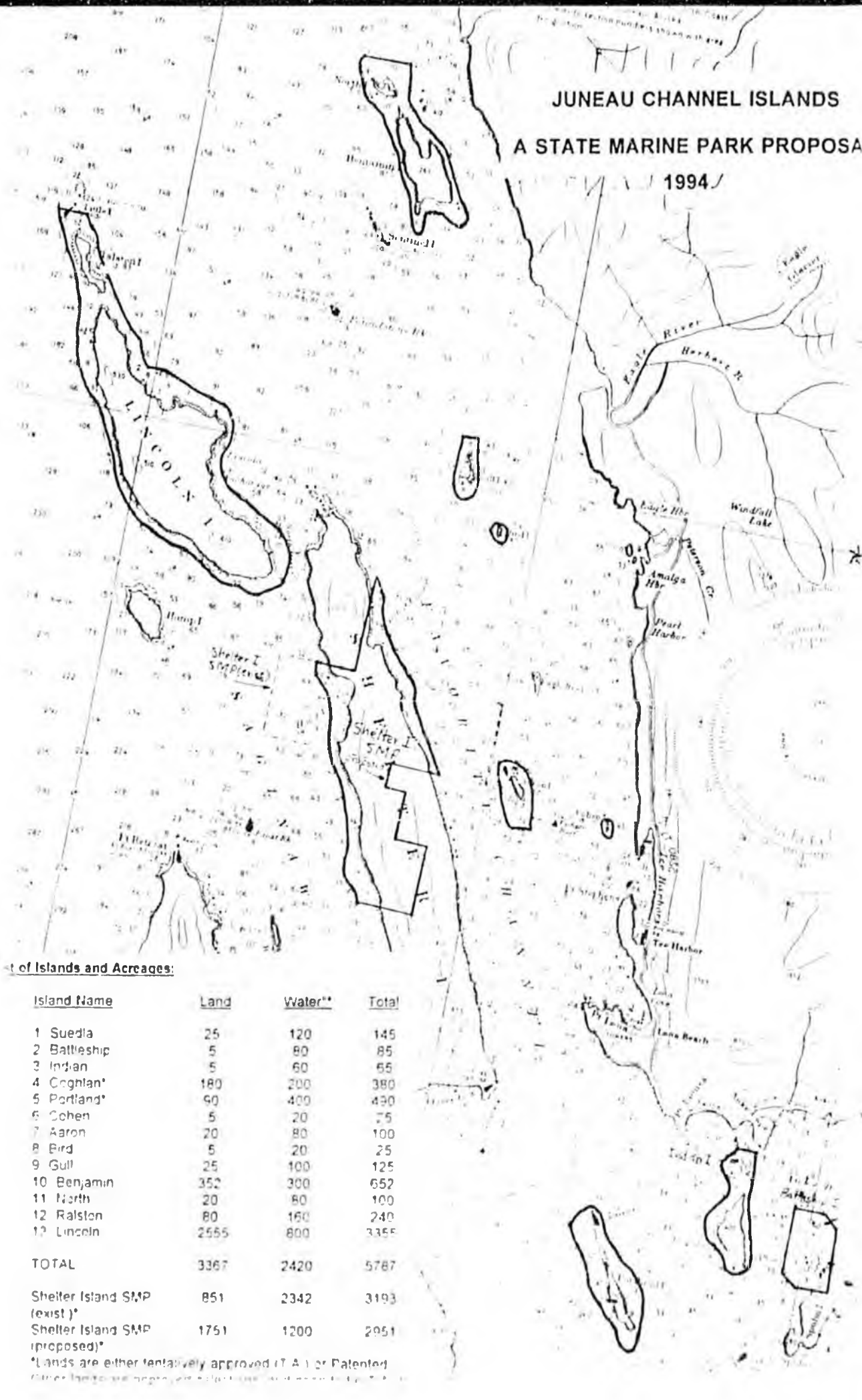


Table of Islands and Acreages:

Island Name	Land	Water**	Total
1 Suedia	25	120	145
2 Ball's Ship	5	80	85
3 Indian	5	60	65
4 Coghtlan*	180	200	380
5 Portland*	90	400	490
6 Cohen	5	20	25
7 Aaron	20	80	100
8 Bird	5	20	25
9 Gulf	25	100	125
10 Benjamin	352	300	652
11 North	20	80	100
12 Ralston	80	160	240
13 Lincoln	2555	800	3355
TOTAL	3367	2420	5787
Shelter Island SMP (exist)*	851	2342	3193
Shelter Island SMP (proposed)*	1751	1200	2951

*Lands are either tentatively approved (T.A.) or Patented. Other lands are proposed but not yet approved.

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
JUNEAU CHANNEL ISLANDS MARINE PARK

MARCH 29, 1995

THANK YOU MR. CHAIRMAN. MY NAME IS ALAN WALKER, I AM A PRIVATE CONSULTANT WITH ARCTIC ASSOCIATES INTERNATIONAL AND A RETIRED COAST GUARD OFFICER. I AM SPEAKING TODAY ON MY OWN BEHALF.

FIRST I'D LIKED TO STATE THAT I CONSIDER MYSELF TO BE PRO-DEVELOPMENT, WHILE MAINTAINING ENVIRONMENTAL SENSITIVITY AND A LONG RANGE VIEW TOWARD SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

OVER THE PAST THREE DECADES I HAVE LIVED IN AND OBSERVED NUMEROUS COASTAL AREAS INCLUDING MANY OF THE ALASKAN COASTAL REGIONS. WE HAVE SOME OF THE MORE UNIQUE ECOSYSTEMS FOUND ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD. THE BILL BEFORE YOU TODAY WILL HELP TO PRESERVE A SMALL PORTION OF ONE OF THOSE ECOSYSTEMS FOR USE AND ENJOYMENT BY CURRENT RESIDENTS AND VISITORS, WHILE HELPING TO ENSURE FUTURE GENERATIONS HAVE THAT SAME OPPORTUNITY.

THERE IS A CURRENT TREND IN MANY AREAS OF THE UNITED STATES TO ATTEMPT TO RESTORE WETLANDS, GREENSPACE AND LOCALIZED ECOSYSTEMS TO PRE-DEVELOPMENT STATUS. THAT IS A DIFFICULT, TIME CONSUMING AND COSTLY PROCESS. IT IS BEING UNDERTAKEN BY NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, CORPORATIONS AND MUNICIPALITIES. HB 91 WOULD BE ONE PREMPTIVE STEP TO AVOID ATTEMPTS AT COSTLY AND SOMETIMES FUTILE RESTORATION EFFORTS IN



Alaska Environmental Lobby, Inc.

P.O. Box 22151 Juneau, Alaska 99802

Phone: 907-463-3366

Fax: 907-463-3312

• HB 91 MARINE PARKS ADDITIONS

- The Alaska Environmental Lobby supports the addition of thirteen islands in Favorite Channel and Auke Bay to the Alaska state park system.
- The City and Borough of Juneau and the State of Alaska have indicated in various planning documents that managing the islands for recreational use is a priority, and that active management is needed as the islands are heavily used and in danger of suffering further resource degradation.
- State park designation will provide for consolidated management of intertidal and upland resources with adequate enforcement authority.
- Creation of the Juneau Channel Islands State Marine Park would be an outstanding addition to the Alaska state park system, ensuring future quality recreational opportunities for local residents of the Juneau area and tourists.

3/29/95

J R C

JUNEAU RACQUET CLUB

TO	Mr. Gary Davis
FROM	John P. McConnochie
DATE	03-29-95
REMARKS	

03.29.95

Honorable Gary Davis
 Chair
 House Transportation Committee
 Alaska State Capitol
 Juneau, Alaska

Dear Representative Davis,

I am writing to you in my capacity as Chair of the Juneau Area State Parks Citizens Advisory Board to ask for your support of HB 91, the Juneau Channol Islands Marine Park.

My rationale for supporting this bill are two fold. First, the Juneau Marine Park would tie into a network of marine parks ranging from Washington, British Columbia and into Alaska. With more people taking "adventure" holidays this network of parks could elevate the number of tourists visiting our City.

Secondly the Marine Park would preserve the existing use of the Islands, which is mainly recreational, for many generaticns to come. To answer the question of those who think we are locking up this land I would respond in the following manner. I consider myself an advocate of business development but in the case of the Islands in question they would be very difficult to develop and there has been no indication to date of anyone wanting to do so.

Again I ask for your support for HB 91.

Yours sincerely

John P. McConnochie
 John P. McConnochie
 Owner
 Juneau Racquet Club

cc.
 Honorable Beverly Masak
 Honorable Bill Williams
 Honorable Jeannette Janna
 Honorable Jerry Sanders
 Honorable Tom Brice
 Honorable Eileen MacLean



**Alaska Rainforest Tours, 369 S. Franklin, Suite 200, Juneau, AK 99801
fax 907-463-4453, phone 907-463-3466**

March 28, 1995

Representative Gary Davis, Chair
House of Representatives
House Transportation Committee

Dear Representative Davis:

I urge all members of the Transportation Committee to support House Bill 91, creating the Juneau Channel Islands Marine Park. Creation of the Juneau Channel Islands Marine Park is an investment which benefits Juneau today and ensures public access to these islands for recreational purposes in the future.

As a tourism business owner, I know that tourism studies have shown that park designation enhances the marketability and value of tourism not just to the protected areas but to access points (such as Juneau) as well.

I grew up exploring the many islands which will be included in Juneau Channel Islands Marine Park and I place great value on protecting those islands so that I may continue to kayak, camp, picnic and enjoy them as wild and accessible places for the rest of my life. Thinking beyond, generations not yet born should have the same privilege to play and learn on these beaches.

Please promptly move HB 91 from committee with a "do pass" recommendation and support passage in a vote before the full House.

Sincerely,

Karla Hart
Partner

PHIL R. HOLDSWORTH, P.E.
CONSULTING ENGINEER & LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL
MINING — GEOLOGY — LANDS

PHONE 907-586-1383

326 FOURTH STREET, No 1009
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801

April 10, 1991

Representative Fran Ulmer
Room 421, Capitol
P.O. Box V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Representative Fran Ulmer:

As you may recall, the undersigned testified in support of SB 114 before the Senate Resources Committee and explained in some detail the historical creation of the extensive State marine parks system which has been created. The State of Alaska had been authorized to select limited tracts of land within the National Forest for "community expansion" and "community recreation areas".

I was present when HB 131 was heard by the House Resources Committee but had not planned to testify, as DNR covered the issue and presented the map describing the islands involved. I was asked to confirm some positions which were questioned by the committee.

The marine park units covered by this bill are clearly "community" recreation areas, and are ideal for recreational use by the community of Juneau. The area described in the bill covers several small channel islands and a portion of Shelter Island. The land is still in Forest Service ownership but has been selected by the State, and will be approved for conveyance as the land certainly meets the qualification as "community recreation". There are no known mineral potentials on the involved islands and the Alaska Miners Association has expressed no opposition to the bill.

Sincerely,



Phil R. Holdsworth



ALASKA OUTDOOR COUNCIL, INC.

P. O. BOX 22394
JUNEAU, AK. 99802
(907) 463-3830

Mar. 29, 1995

Representative Gary Davis, Chair
House Transportation Committee
State Capitol
Juneau, Ak. 99801

Dear Representative Davis:

The Alaska Outdoor Council took a position several years ago in support of HB 91, which would amend the State Marine Parks system by adding the Channel Islands. We are still in basic support of this concept as long as the original statute's provisions for maintaining hunting, trapping and fishing opportunities remain intact.

The Alaska Outdoor Council traditionally supported many classifications of state lands when a demonstrated public objective would ensue. We have always supported broad use of public lands and will continue to do so.

We encourage the House Transportation Committee and the Legislature to pass HB 91. Thank you for this opportunity to present our views on this subject.

Sincerely,

Eddie Grasser
Legislative Affairs

cc: Rep. Caren Robinson
Rep. Beverly Masek
Rep. Bill Williams
Rep. Jeannette James
Rep. Jerry Sanders
Rep. Tom Brice
Rep. Eileen MacLean

Presented by: Mayor & Assembly
Introduced: 03/06/95
Drafted by: J.R.C.

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU, ALASKA

Serial No. 1752

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING CREATION OF THE JUNEAU CHANNEL ISLANDS STATE MARINE PARK.

WHEREAS, it has been proposed that the State of Alaska establish the Juneau Channel Islands Marine Park composed of thirteen islands located in a 640-acre area in Favorite Channel and Auke Bay, and

WHEREAS, the thirteen islands in the proposed park include: Aaron, Battleship, Benjamin, Bird, Cohen, Coghlan, Gull, Lincoln, Indian, North, Portland, Ralston, and Suedla, and

WHEREAS, the park would be an outstanding recreational asset, offering breathtaking views of the Chilkat Mountains and the Juneau ice field, supporting many species of birds, sea mammals, fish, and deer, and providing safe and ready access for established groups of canoers, kayakers, boaters and other users, and

WHEREAS, designation of the area as a Special Purpose Site and withdrawal of the land to the management system of the State Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation would be the most effective process for preserving existing recreational uses and accommodating future needs, and

WHEREAS, action by the Alaska Legislature is necessary to accomplish the withdrawal, and there is currently pending in the Legislature, HB 91 and SB 34 which propose to accomplish creation of the Juneau Channel Islands Marine Park and an addition to the existing Shelter Island State Marine Park, and


WHEREAS, the CBJ Parks and Recreation Advisory Board at its meeting of January 17, 1995, and the Assembly Lands Committee at its meeting of February 22, 1995, recommended that this resolution be adopted supporting establishment of the Juneau Channel Islands Marine Park;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU, ALASKA:

1. That the Assembly of the City and Borough of Juneau supports legislation that will create the Juneau Channel Islands State Marine Park.
2. The Clerk shall distribute copies of this resolution to the Alaska Legislative Delegation.

3. Effective Date. This resolution shall be effective immediately upon adoption.

Adopted this 6th day of March, 1995.



Mayor

Attest:



Clerk

JUNEAU CHANNEL ISLANDS
A STATE MARINE PARK PROPOSAL



Presented by
The Juneau Area State Parks Advisory Board
1994

Introduction

Alaska has the opportunity to establish one of the most wonderful and exciting parks anywhere in the world right here in our capital city. Thirteen islands in Favorite Channel and Auke Bay near Juneau are proposed as the Juneau Channel Islands State Marine Park. This proposal also includes an addition to the existing Shelter Island State Marine Park (SMP). The marine park boundaries would be at the 20 fathom depth around each island, easily determined by most pleasure and all commercial boats.

Four of these islands are within the sheltered waters of Auke Bay and can be reached by canoe, kayak or rowboat in nearly any weather. Each has a long history of use by local youths and families for camping and picnicking. The other nine islands are further off shore and more exposed to storms. Recreation has always been their predominant use, and because of this use they were selected from and approved by the federal government for state ownership.

All but two islands have one or more sand or gravel beaches suitable for landing small boats. There is evidence of camping and picnicking at all of these beaches. All the islands have scenic headlands affording breathtaking views of neighboring islands against a spectacular backdrop of mountains and glaciers. A broad expanse of the Chilkat Mountains flank the area to the west, and the world famous Mendenhall Glacier, and the glaciers and peaks of the Juneau Icefield are visible to the east. Five of the islands are large enough to provide some hiking, and the rest are small enough to scramble all over in an hour or less. There are hills to 1,000 feet on the larger islands.

The islands, except one, are covered by typical rain forest vegetation including Sitka Spruce and Western Hemlock with a profusion of berry bushes and other undergrowth. Some of the islands show evidence of selective tree cutting. There are trails near the accessible beaches, and a few human artifacts, but the islands are essentially pristine and undeveloped.

Sea mammals are much in evidence in these waters. Seals to a hundred or more haul out on several of the beaches and there is a regularly used sea lion haulout at Benjamin Island. Humpback whales are often visible, especially in summer. The entire area is within Juneau's most popular sport salmon fishing waters, and boats are always nearby in summer. There is a resident deer population on three islands that provide some hunting.

Many species of birds nest on these islands including pigeon guillemots and black oyster catchers which do not nest on the nearby mainland. There are more than 90 bald eagle nests, and eagles are common year-round residents.

Need for Legislation:

Only the legislature can withdraw over 640 acres from the public domain and designate them as Special Purpose Sites (a state park) under the state's constitution. The island beaches of the proposed park are already heavily used for camping and picnicking and have nearly reached their capacity for self-regulated recreation. Litter is not yet a major problem but human waste is evident in the woods near popular campsites. Fires are often built on forest duff, killing some large spruce and causing peat fires which smolder for weeks. Juneau is rapidly becoming a major ecotourism destination, and commercial guides are likely to soon be competing with local residents for the limited beaches and campsites. It is essential to institute a management system of the type provided by the State Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation to preserve the quality of existing recreational use and accommodate future needs. Only state park management can meet the need of combining water, intertidal and upland uses into one entity with adequate enforcement authority to protect the resources while providing for safe use. The need to protect these islands for recreational use is recognized by both the city and state plans: The Juneau Coastal Management Plan and the Juneau State Land Plan.



Objectives:

Creation of Juneau Channel Islands State Marine Park would be an outstanding addition to Alaska State Parks, providing an island complex not represented by other units of the Park system. The new park would fully satisfy statutory requirements for state marine parks including:

- 1) Maintaining natural, cultural, and scenic values;
- 2) Maintaining fish and wildlife resources and lawful existing uses of these resources;
- 3) Promoting and supporting recreation and tourism in the state.

Long Term Management:

A long term management plan for the islands as a park unit should be developed. As competition for use of these resources increases, it may become necessary to determine how the public would like these islands to be managed. Designations for day use vs. overnight camping, single campsites vs. group campsites, public vs. commercial use and capacity of the various islands to sustain different use levels may eventually need to be addressed. As use continues to increase improvements will be needed. Fire places, toilets, tables and gravel tent sites can enhance public use and can be sited to spread users thus accommodating more parties. A system of trails on the larger islands would enhance use and could also serve to spread people out. There is a potential for recreation cabins, especially on the larger islands where deer hunters as well as summer users would enjoy them. There may be a potential for some mooring floats at some of the islands. A small inter-island ferry, serving day users and campers, operated by a concessionaire, may some day be feasible.

The Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation should develop a long term management plan. As improvements are added, normal state park user fees can be collected.

Land Ownership:

As part of the Statehood Act, the Federal Government allowed the State of Alaska to select 400,000 acres from National Forest lands as a land base. The acreages were to be selected from unencumbered federal lands and used for community expansion and/or community recreation purposes. All lands within this Marine Park proposal were selected by the State of Alaska as part of that land selection process.

As early as 1977 many of these islands were nominated for selection by the City and Borough of Juneau for recreation purposes. By June of 1989 this board, the Taku Conservation Society, the City and Borough of Juneau, and Alaska State Parks all nominated these islands for inclusion in a state marine park.

All surrounding marine water, tidelands and submerged lands are already owned by the State of Alaska. If not designated as a marine park, these recreational lands would be managed by the Division of Land. Division of Land selection documents indicate that the intent of the selection of many of these parcels was based on recognition of their current use and suitability for public recreation. Tentative Approval and Patents have been issued to the state on some already, and the Bureau of Land Management is expected to finish Tentative Approval (full management) within the next few months.

There are only two small parcels of private lands within the existing Shelter Island State Marine Park. This proposal does not include any private lands.

Juneau International Airport, through the Federal Aviation Administration, has existing rights and facilities on Coghlan Island. Any future need for facilities to provide safer landing would be of great benefit for the health and safety of all travellers, including tourists to the park.

Island Characteristics - Individual Island Descriptions

Aaron Island (0.4 mi. long)

Orth reports that the island was named in 1880 by Capt. L.A. Beardslee, USN, for "a relative of C.J. Vanderbilt, a local miner." DeArmond, however, indicates that there is no record of a local miner by the name of Aaron. Beardslee was friends with J.M. Vanderbilt for whom he named Vanderbilt Reef, but that family disclaims knowledge of any Aaron. DeArmond, instead suggests that the island was named for Aaron Cohen, a resident of Sitka and then Juneau, who owned and operated a brewery in both towns. DeArmond also believes that Cohen Island and reef were also named after Aaron Cohen.

The island consists mainly of cliffs and headlands. There is a small landing beach on the south end. There is also a small rocky islet at the NE end with a small beach. Dominant vegetation on Aaron Island is rain forest and the small rocky islet is covered with herbaceous vegetation (plants and flowers). Two Bald eagle nests are located on the island. There is a navigation light and a navigation reflector found on the island. Two picnic sites and one camp site are also located on the island.

Battleship Island (0.1 mi. across)

Apparently a local descriptive name first reported by DeArmond in 1957. The island is mostly a vegetated rock with steep sides and a fairly flat top. There is one poor landing beach where rocks have been cleared to aid in landing. Large trees are found on the top. Several camp sites and numerous trails and a lot of litter are present. Island appears to be used a lot by kids as well as adults. Island is readily accessible via sheltered waters. FAA plans to install aircraft navigation lights and electronics in 1995. Large numbers of crows roost on island at night.

Benjamin Island (1.5 mi. long)

Named by Capt. L.A. Beardslee, USN in 1880 when he visited the area. There are three excellent gravel beaches on the south end of the island. Each has one or more heavily used camp sites. There also is a good access beach with a campsite on the northeast side of the island. Primary vegetation is typical rain forest. An important sea lion haulout is located on the west side of the island.

Bird Island
(0.1 mi. across)

Named in 1880 by Capt. L.A. Beardslee and later published on USC&GS chart 728 in 1883. In February 1914, the schooner *W.H. Dimond* went aground on the island and was a total loss.

The island is mainly a rock about 60 feet high with stunted trees on the top. Steep cliffs on the south and west sides. East side of island is less steep and access is difficult but possible. Two Bald eagle nests are on the island. Ten to fifteen pigeon guillemot nests were observed on the cliffs in June and July. No evidence of human use on the island.



Cohen Island
(0.3 mile across)

Named by the USC&GS and published on chart 8300 in 1893. (See discussion under Aaron Island). Cliffs and headlands all around the island. No good landing sites. Rain forest vegetation and two Bald eagle nests present.

Coghlan Island
(1 mi. long)

Named by the USC&GS in 1885 in honor of Joseph Bullock Coghlan, USN, who commanded the *U.S.S. Adams* in a survey of the area in 1883-1884. In later years Coghlan commanded the *U.S.S. Raleigh* during the Philippines campaign of the Spanish American War, and served as commandant of the Puget Sound and New York Naval Shipyards. He rose to the rank of rear admiral and retired in 1906. He died in 1908.

An FAA navigation beacon is located on the northern point of the island. A small building with a tramway is also present on the island and is currently being used by the FAA. There are cliffs on the SW side and beaches on the NW and E sides. Beaches provide good access. The island is forested with a berry understory. There is evidence of fire damage. Pigeon guillemots nest on the NW side. Evidence of camping and picnicking. The island is accessible by sheltered waters and is reachable by small boats and kayaks in all seasons. Has significant deer population most years. Good littleneck and butter clam digging on north end.

Gull Island
(0.4 mi. across)

Named in 1880 by Capt. L.A. Beardslee, USN, because "it was covered by sea gulls." Name published by USC&GS in the 1883 Coast Pilot. There is an excellent sandy beach on the south end with a heavily used campsite.

Lincoln Island
(4.7 miles long)

Named in 1868 by Cmdr. R.W. Meade, USN, of the *U.S.S. Saginaw*, presumably for Abraham Lincoln, 16th. President of the U.S. Name published by the USC&GS in the 1883 Coast Pilot.

There are gravel and cobble beaches on the east side with low (30 ft.) headlands. A sandy beach with camp site is located on the southern end. The west side has cobly rocky beaches. It is exposed to winds and waves of Lynn Canal. The island consists of low, well forested hills, with open headlands on the east side and low herbaceous growth. According to USFWS records there are 17 Bald eagle nests on the island. Deer are also present. There are 5 or 6 good landing sites on the east side and south end, and all have evidence of camping and picnicking use.

Indian Island
(0.1 mi. across)

Local name published in 1962 by the USGS. There are two good landing beaches. The island is within 200 yards of the mainland and is accessible in all weather conditions. There are two shipwrecks, one is a wood fish scow abandoned in 1970 on the east shore.

In late 1950's and early 1960's it was a summer campsite of older natives. During that time they gathered herring roe on hemlock branches. At the same time there was a large herring pound between Indian Point and Indian Island for three months during the spring to harvest halibut bait and live sport fish bait. There are remnants of a Tlingit canoe way on the east beach. Large trees are on the island, one containing a Bald eagle nest. There is one much used campsite with quite a bit of litter.



North Island
(0.4 mi. long)

Named in 1880 by either Capt. L.A. Beardslee, USN, or by Cmdr. R.W. Meade, USN, in 1869. Name was published in the 1883 Coast Pilot by the USC&GS. A popular anchorage for commercial gillnetters fishing Mab Island and Berners Bay. Exposed to northerly winds and seas. There is an excellent beach on the South end that is a whale viewing area.

Portland Island
(1.1 mile long)

Named in 1880 by Capt. L.A. Beardslee, USN. Published in the 1883 Coast Pilot. An extensive reef with some vegetated hummocks is located on the northern end of the island. There is a campground with picnic tables located on the western side of the island. There is a very nice sand beach on the southwest corner, a beach on the east side, and a gravel beach near the northern reef. There are five bald eagle nests on the island and black oystercatchers nest on the reef. Other birds use the north reef for nesting and roosting.

Old stumps indicate some selective logging years ago. There is a poor trail across the southern end of the island. The FS picnic site consists of three tables with cement fireplaces, and an outhouse. All need maintenance.

Ralston Island
(1 mi. long)

Named for W.C. Ralston by Cmdr. R.W. Meade, USN, in 1868. Published in the 1883 Coast Pilot. A World War II CAA (now FAA) radio range station used to be located on the northern shore of the island. Remnants of the facility are still visible. Antenna and house on the north end, and dock pilings on south end with heavily overgrown road connecting them.

Landing beaches on south and east sides. Headlands on east side. Also extensive reefs on east side. Island is connected to Lincoln Island at low tides. Ralston Island is forested with some open meadows. There are two Bald eagle nests on the island. Camping and picnic sites located on the south end.

Shelter Island
(9 mi. long)

The island was named in 1869 by Cmdr. R.W. Meade, USN, and published in the 1883 Coast Pilot. There is already a designated marine park on Shelter Island adjacent to Shelter Cove. This addition would include the center portion with Shelter Lake. There is an old Forest Service cabin (not maintained) in the center parcel. Large sandy beach at Hand Trollers Cove. Also reported remnants of cabins at cove. The island is heavily timbered with spruce and hemlock and scattered groves of Alaska yellow cedar. Deer are common on the island and heavily hunted. Southern end of the island was homesteaded and the homestead was later subdivided and sold. Numerous private cabins are now located on the southern end of island, several miles from the proposed marine park addition.

Suedla Island
(0.3 mi. across)

Local name apparently formed by combining the initial letters of several names or words. Its origin is unknown. Also known as "Merlin's Island" by local residents. The main island has three small gravel beaches on the east side, but other sides are cliffs. There is a very good sand beach on the connected islet on the east side. The island is close to shore and has very protected waters. Main vegetation is large trees with typical undergrowth. Two Bald eagle nests are located on the island. Heavy picnicking and camping use are noted on the east islet. There are ruins of cabin and fox pens in the center of the island.

NOTE: Much of the general site and wildlife information was obtained from Advisory Board member visits to the various islands.

References

- DeArmond, R.N. 1989. Names on the Chart and how they got there. Commercial Art, Juneau, AK. 72 pp.
- Eppenbach, Sara, ed. 1979. The Centennial gazetteer: a guide to Juneau, Alaska place names. Gastineau Channel Centennial Association, Juneau, AK. 74 pp.
- Gibbs, Jim. 1971. Disaster Log of Ships. Bonanza Books, New York, NY. 176 pp.
- Orth, Donald J. 1967, reprinted 1971. Dictionary of Alaska Place Names. Geological Survey Professional Paper 567. U.S. Govt. Print. Office, Wash. DC. 1084 pp.
- United States Coast Guard, 1990 rev. Lighthouses and other aids to navigation in Alaska history. Seventeenth Coast Guard District, Juneau, AK. 87 pp.

Abbreviations Used

- CAA -- Civil Aeronautics Administration
Capt. -- Captain
Cmdr. -- Commander
FAA -- Federal Aviation Administration
FS-- Forest Service
Lt. -- Lieutenant
USC&GS -- United States Coast and Geodetic Survey
USFWS -- United State Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS-- United States Geological Survey
USN -- United States Navy