



09WJ West Juneau

Geography, subsheds, ownership CBJ's 09WJ map page contains 5 Priority Areas totalling 276 acres, all on City land.

On this map are just 3 'subsheds,' shown here with blue lines. The largest, Lawson Creek subshed, drains 3.4 square miles through a deeply incised canyon to an estuary at the northern end of the town of Douglas. Bear Creek subshed drains 576 acres through the heart of Douglas.

At higher sea level and before streams were incised, this was an alternate distributary of the much larger Lawson system. Paris Creek subshed drains 968 acres to Sandy Beach, south of Douglas Boat Harbor.

We completed surveying wetlands on this map page in the first few weeks of the project, May, 2014. Because only 15 wetland (AA) units were assessed within this rather compact map page, 'context' inset maps are unnecessary additions to the following unit map-pairs. Please refer to the map on left for unit location.

Geomorphology, glacial history Landforms on the gently-sloping terraces behind West Juneau and the town of Douglas are continuous with and similar in origin to those described in the introduction to the 08ND map page. When sea level stood hundreds of feet higher, fine sediment blanketed the sea floor, which now underlies poorly drained communities of forested wetland (*fw*) and open peatland (*op*).

Ecology Of 276 acres in the 5 Priority Areas surveyed, 184 acres (67%) are wetland. This percentage is exceeded only on the 08ND and 04AB map pages. Of those wetland acres, only 32 are open peatland (17%). That's close to the average

of 15% *op*, and much less than the 50% *op* mapped on the 08ND map page. This shifting balance of forested to open peatland is probably best explained by the somewhat steeper gradients of the 09WJ wetlands.

Culture Unlike European names honoring IWGs (important white guys: Douglas, Lawson, Thane) that dominate today's maps, Tlingit names convey what is—or was—unique about that place. Douglas Island is Sayéik, variably translated as *spirit helper* or *voice of the spirit*. The name for the mining settlement of Douglas became X'aat T'aak, *town behind the island*, ie Mayflower Island.

Shgóonaa Héenak'u, *Schooner's little creek* (Lawson Creek) is so named because at one time a schooner used to anchor off the mouth. Anax Yaa Andagan Yé, *where the sun's rays hit first* (Douglas Boat Harbor). Thane, named for a mining superintendent, is Koosh, variably translated as *oozing sore*, or *muddy flats*.¹

In precontact times, what became Douglas and Treadwell had little appeal for year-round settlement, hosting only fish camps at stream mouths. With arrival of miners, Treadwell briefly expanded into the world's largest gold mine. T'aakú Kwáan established a village on the site of today's Savikko Park, that was eventually burned in 1962 to make way for harbor expansion.

¹ Published names and translations come from Thornton & Martin, eds (2012). Alternate translations courtesy Marie Olson, Wooshkeetaan (personal communication).

Above: West over Bear Creek bog, sometimes called Gastineau Meadows. Unit WJ07 in foreground, extending over a subshed divide to WJ13 in right distance. Recently constructed, raised trail berm in lower left. • **Right:** South over the Lawson-Bear Creek subshed divide. Canyon of Lawson on right.

