

## Appendix C

### INDIVIDUAL ROADLESS AREA DESCRIPTION

**ROADLESS AREA NAME:** Twelvemile (534)

**ACRES (NFS):** 34,333

**BIOGEOGRAPHIC PROVINCE:** North Central Prince of Wales Island

**ECOLOGICAL SECTION:** Kupreanof Lowlands and Prince of Wales Mountains

**2003 WILDERNESS ATTRIBUTE RATING:** 16

#### **I. Overview and Description**

(1) **Location and Access:** The Twelvemile Roadless Area is located on the east-central part of Prince of Wales Island approximately 40 air miles west of Ketchikan. It is bounded by roaded areas with the exception that Twelvemile Arm occupies part of the northern border. Twelvemile Arm and developments to the south divide the roadless area into two portions. State Highway 913 (the Hydaburg Road) lies to the west and the town of Hollis, the closest community on the Alaska Marine Highway, lies less than 1 mile north of the area across Twelvemile Arm. Access is by ferry through Hollis, by the extensive road system surrounding most of the area, by helicopter, and by boat or floatplane from Twelvemile Arm. There are no places suitable for landing wheeled aircraft

(2) **History:** The Polk Inlet and Twelvemile Arm areas were important locales of traditional use by the Haida Native people and before them, prehistoric cultures. The Kaigani Haida are recognized as having the rights to much of the lower half of Prince of Wales Island at historic contact (USDA Forest Service, 1995). The two remaining Haida villages are located just outside the roadless area at Hydaburg and Kasaan. Historic use of Twelvemile Arm included hunting, trapping, fishing, and gardening. Most of these activities were concentrated around the Harris River and the present day location of Hollis (USDA Forest Service, 1995). The Haida Native Corporation made large land entitlement selections to the south of the roadless area and the Sealaska Native Corporation owns land along the northeastern border.

The Twelvemile area has historically been a primary entry to Prince of Wales Island. The community of Hollis lies less than 1 mile north of the roadless area. Hollis began as a mining community, but it soon became the boat entry terminal through Kasaan Bay. Currently, Hollis is the only ferry stop on the Prince of Wales Island. Alaska Marine Highway has discontinued service to Hollis. Ferry service between Ketchikan and Hollis is now operated by the Inter-Island Ferry Authority (IFA). Mining, trading/supply, boat repair, and, more recently, timber and tourism, have been the influences on the general vicinity of the roadless area.

(3) **Geography and Topography:** The area is characterized by moderate topography. Most of this roadless area consists of rolling terrain; however, there are a few higher ridges with elevations ranging to above 2,400 feet. Old Franks and Indian Creeks are the largest streams occupying portions of the area. Alpine acres total 1,283 and 320 acres are rock. Freshwater lakes cover approximately 279 acres. Saltwater shoreline extends for about 18 miles along both sides of Twelvemile Arm. The area also contains eight islets totaling 3 acres.

(4) **Ecosystem:**

(a) **Classification:** Biogeographic Province. The area is classified as being in the North Central Prince of Wales Island Biogeographic Province. This province is characterized by relatively gentle topography; limestone soils are common. Karst topography and caves are often present within the province; however, there is no known karst within this roadless area.

Ecological Section/Subsection. The Twelvemile River Roadless Area is covered by two ecological sections: the Kupreanof Lowlands (M247G) and Prince of Wales Mountains (M247I). These areas are

represented by three ecological subsections (see table below). The Central Prince of Wales Volcanics Ecological Subsection (98% of roadless area) occupies vast majority of the roadless area. At high elevations, soils are shallow over bedrock, often organic, and less productive. Well-drained, moderately to highly productive, glacial till soils predominate at lower elevations. Hemlock and hemlock-spruce forests occur on well-drained sites. The Skowl Arm Till Lowlands Ecological Subsection (2% of roadless area) is a landscape of glacially rounded, low hills, lakes, and wetlands (Nowacki et al., 2001).

Ecological Section	Ecological Subsection	Percent of Roadless Area
Prince of Wales Mountains	Central Prince of Wales Volcanics	98%
	Hetta Inlet Metasediments	<1%
Kupreanof Lowlands	Skowl Arm Till Lowlands	2%

**(b) Soils:** These highly organic, low clay content soils are generally formed over bedrock and are typically about 40 inches deep.

**(c) Vegetation:** This area is typical southeast Alaska coastal temperate rain forest. The forest is primarily western hemlock and Sitka spruce with large components of cedar. Approximately 139 acres of muskeg are mapped for the area; however, due to their small size and association with forested sites, accurate acreage estimates are difficult.

There are approximately 31,669 acres mapped as forestland, of which 11,532 acres or 36 percent are mapped as productive old-growth forest. Of the productive old growth, 5,031 acres or 44 percent are mapped as high-volume old-growth forest. The productive old growth includes about 1,453 acres of high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. There are also 980 acres of second growth resulting from older beach logging along Twelvemile Arm and recent helicopter harvest in the uplands east of Twelvemile Arm.

**(d) Fish Resources:** The streams in this area provide habitat for coho, pink, and chum salmon, cutthroat and steelhead trout, and Dolly Varden char. The Anadromous Waters Catalogue (ADF&G, 2000) shows a number of fish-bearing streams in this area, including Indian Creek, Old Franks Creek, Kina Creek, and upper Cabin Creek.

**(e) Wildlife Resources:** This area has high populations of Sitka black-tailed deer, black bear, wolves, otter, marten, mink, and common waterfowl. Brown bear, moose, and mountain goats are not known to inhabit this area.

**(5) Management Direction and Current Uses:** This roadless area was allocated to five different Land Use Designations (LUDs) under the 1997 Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan. These five LUDs are Timber Production, Modified Landscape, Scenic Viewshed, Old-growth Habitat, and Semi-remote Recreation.

LUD	Acres
Timber Production	13,769
Modified Landscape	720
Scenic Viewshed	62
Old-growth Habitat	19,779
Semi-remote Recreation	3

Approximately 42 percent of this roadless area was allocated to a development LUD (Timber Production, Modified Landscape, and Scenic Viewshed). The Timber Production LUD was assigned to approximately 40 percent of the roadless area. Approximately two percent of the roadless area was allocated to the Modified Landscape LUD. Small portions of the area were allocated to the Scenic Viewshed LUD, which total less than one percent of the roadless area.

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Most of this roadless area was allocated to non-development LUDs (Old-growth Habitat, Semi-remote Recreation). The Old-growth Habitat LUD comprises 58 percent of the roadless area. The islands along the Twelvemile Inlet were allocated to the Semi-remote Recreation LUD, which accounts for less than one percent of the roadless area.

The Twelvemile Inlet area is the site of recent active timber sales associated with the Polk Inlet Project. This project resulted in recent harvest and road construction in the Twelvemile Arm and Polk Inlet portions of the area and along Indian Creek.

Dispersed recreation is also an important use in this area. The convenient road and boat accesses have made such places as the Harris River, Indian Creek, Twelvemile Arm, and other streams and waterways popular fishing and hunting places. Indian Creek Road is gated and closed to motorized vehicles. One Duck Trail and Shelter is located within the roadless area. Pass Lake Trail is located along the Polk Road just outside the roadless area. Twelvemile Arm is popular for dispersed camping and recreation opportunities.

**(6) Appearance (Apparent Naturalness):** This roadless area is somewhat fragmented and is completely surrounded by timber management related developments with the exception of the portion along Twelvemile Arm; however, this area has experienced fairly extensive beach logging. The land remaining within the roadless area appears unmodified and in a natural condition.

**(7) Surroundings (External Influences):** This area is almost completely surrounded by developed areas. The exceptions are in portions of the area along Twelvemile Arm. Timber management related developments are ongoing on adjacent National Forest System lands and lands to the northeast owned by Sealaska Regional Corporation. This area receives higher use by people than many other unroaded places on Prince of Wales Island because of its proximity to Hollis and the Prince of Wales Island road system.

**(8) Attractions and Features of Special Interest:** The natural features of the Twelvemile Roadless Area, the scenery, the saltwater bays and inlets, and the opportunity to see wildlife are all attractions. The area contains 12 inventoried recreation places, which cover 23,530 acres, or 69 percent of the roadless area. Many of these recreation places are readily accessible to residents of Hollis and other areas on Prince of Wales Island.

**(9) Differences between the 1989 and 2003 Roadless Area Boundary:** The Twelvemile Roadless Area was originally part of the much larger Polk Roadless Area identified in 1989. Because of ongoing developments in the area since then, the Polk Roadless Area was divided into three separate areas: Kasaan Bay, McKenzie, and Twelvemile Roadless Areas. The Twelvemile portion of the original Polk Roadless Area has been reduced in size by the ongoing developments conducted in the late 1990's, particularly in the Indian Creek, upper Old Franks Creek, upper Cabin Creek, and Polk Inlet areas. Several smaller areas near developed boundaries have been excluded between the Draft and Final SEIS to improve manageability in those areas.

### **II. Capability for Management as Wilderness**

**(1) Natural Integrity and Apparent Naturalness:** The land within the roadless area appears unmodified, with the exception of older beach logging along Twelvemile Arm and recent helicopter harvest in the uplands nearby; however, much of this area is highly fragmented and is surrounded by ongoing developments. The degree of landscape alteration surrounding this roadless area reduces the natural integrity and apparent naturalness of this area to a moderate level.

**(2) Opportunity for Solitude and Serenity, Self-reliance, Adventure, Challenging Experiences, and Primitive Recreation:** The opportunity for solitude and primitive recreation within this roadless area is moderate. Because of the sights and sounds of nearby management activities, the sounds of boat use in Twelvemile Arm, and the chance of encountering other people along the streams, the opportunity is considerably reduced.

There are opportunities for primitive recreation at saltwater and upland recreation sites; however, because these sites are not very isolated from the community of Hollis and the Prince of Wales Island road system, these opportunities are limited. The topography of the area does not make travel particularly challenging, but the presence of black bears presents a degree of challenge.

The area provides primarily semi-primitive recreation opportunities. The table below lists the acreage and percent of the various Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) classes that have been inventoried in the roadless area.

ROS Class	Acres	Percent of Total ROS
Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized (SPNM)	23,072	67%
Semi-Primitive Motorized (SPM)	2,961	9%
Roaded Natural (RN)	232	1%
Roaded Modified (RM)	8,063	23%

The area contains 12 inventoried recreation places, which cover 23,530 acres, or 69 percent of the roadless area.

ROS Class	# of Rec. Places*	Total Acres
SPNM	4	15,801
SPM	1	818
RN	1	232
RM	11	6,679

\* Rec. Places may occur in more than one ROS Class; the sum of this column may exceed the total number of Rec. Places.

Dispersed recreation is an important use in this area. One Duck Trail and Shelter is a Forest Service maintained facility within the roadless area and is popular for its panoramic views and hunting opportunities. Winter recreation is also popular at One Duck. The convenient road and boat accesses have made such places as Indian Creek, Twelvemile Arm, and other streams and waterways popular fishing and hunting places. The Harris River is located just north of the roadless area and provides fishing, camping, and hunting opportunities.

**(3) Wilderness Attribute Rating System:** In 1977, the Forest Service, along with public interest groups, developed the Wilderness Attribute Rating System (WARS), which was used to inventory the wilderness characteristics of roadless areas during the second Roadless Area Review and Evaluation process (referred to as RARE II). The purpose of WARS was to provide a measure of the area's wilderness quality, based on the key attributes of wilderness as defined in the Wilderness Act. It is largely based on the attributes described above in items 1 and 2 of this section (natural integrity, apparent naturalness, outstanding opportunity for solitude, and primitive recreation opportunities).

In 1979, during the RARE II process, the Tongass National Forest applied WARS for the first time and rated each unroaded VCU on the Tongass. In 1989, the inventoried roadless areas (which generally include more than one VCU) were rated according to this system for the Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS) developed in support of the Forest Plan Revision. This original version of the AMS included both the individual VCU ratings done in 1979 and the composite rating that was done for each roadless area in 1989. The Twelvemile area was part of the larger Polk Roadless Area in 1989 and was divided into three new areas in 1996 but no new rating was done. The area was given a rating of 16 for this update to the AMS. This rating is reflective of the ongoing developments in the area and on adjacent private lands.

**(4) Ecologic and Geologic Values:** The Twelvemile Roadless Area is not directly connected to any other roadless areas on Prince of Wales Island; it is separated from them by roaded areas or saltwater inlets and sounds. The area contains patchy areas of productive old-growth forest; these areas are fragmented by muskeg, fens, scrub-shrub wetlands, forested wetlands, alpine shrublands, and lakes and ponds. The largest blocks of old growth are along both shores of Twelvemile Arm and in the Old Franks Creek, Indian Creek, and Harris River watersheds.

**(a) Fish Resources:** The Tongass Fish and Wildlife Resource Assessment (ADF&G, 1998) listed VCUs 621, 622, and 624, which cover the western two-thirds of the area, as primary salmon producers. VCUs 621 and 622, which cover the Twelvemile Arm watersheds including Indian Creek and the Harris River, were also listed as primary sportfish producers.

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The streams in this area provide habitat for coho, pink, and chum salmon, cutthroat and steelhead trout, and Dolly Varden char. The Anadromous Waters Catalogue (ADF&G, 2000) shows a number of fish-bearing streams in this area, including Indian Creek, Old Franks Creek, Kina Creek, and upper Cabin Creek. Indian Creek provides habitat for all the species listed above. Old Franks Creek and upper Cabin Creek only provide habitat for coho salmon. Kina Creek is inhabited by coho salmon, cutthroat trout, and Dolly Varden char. The Old Franks drainage has had fish enhancement activities. Two fish ladders exist in the vicinity of Mary's Lake.

**(b) Wildlife Resources:** This area has high populations of Sitka black-tailed deer, black bear, wolves, otter, marten, mink, and common waterfowl. Based on harvest data compiled from 1985 to 1994, VCU's 619 and 634, covering the eastern portion of the area along Cabin Creek and Polk Inlet and northwest portion along Twelvemile Arm, were identified among the top 25 percent of black bear harvest areas on the Tongass (ADF&G, 1998). Sensitive species that potentially occur here include Peale's peregrine falcon, Queen Charlotte goshawk, and the trumpeter swan. Brown bear, moose, and mountain goats are not known to inhabit this area. The East Shore Twelvemile/Old Franks, West Shore Twelvemile/Indian Creek, and the Twelvemile/Trocadero old-growth blocks; and the Polk Inlet/Cabin Creek, One Duck/Twenty mile, Harris River, and Wolf Lake/Hollis/Indian Creek old-growth corridors, are considered important as old-growth blocks and corridors (USDA Forest Service, 1996).

**(c) Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species:** The only federally listed threatened or endangered species likely to occur within or adjacent to the roadless area are the humpback whale (endangered) and the Steller sea lion (threatened). Both of these species are found in adjacent marine waters. Three Forest Service Region 10 Sensitive Species are suspected or known to occur within the area: the trumpeter swan, Peale's peregrine falcon, and the Queen Charlotte goshawk. Trumpeter swans nest in the lowlands on small lakes and along large rivers and winter in ice-free areas throughout the Tongass. Peale's peregrine falcons nest on cliff faces and islands and feed primarily on seabirds. Inhabitants of late seral forests, Queen Charlotte goshawks are closely associated with productive old growth. In addition, nine sensitive plant species are known or suspected to occur in the Craig Ranger District.

**(d) Karst, Cave, and Other Geologic Resources:** There are no known karst or cave resources in this roadless area. However, limited karst topography exists in the Cave Creek drainage, southwest of Twelvemile Arm and just outside the roadless area. There are no glaciers or unique geologic features known in this area.

**(5) Scientific and Educational Values:** There are no special scientific or educational values known for the area. However, the area is readily accessible from the road system and by boat from Hollis, and from the road system by other Prince of Wales Islands communities.

**(6) Scenic Values:** When viewing from Twelvemile Arm, the area appears in a relatively natural condition, even though the keen observer can identify the results of older beach logging. The exception is when looking east in upper Twelvemile Arm, where the area provides a natural backdrop to visible timber harvest activities. When viewing this area from Hydaburg Road, a natural appearance is predominant, despite surrounding developments.

Visual Priority Routes and Use Areas identified by the Forest Plan that are within or adjacent to the area include: Hydaburg Road #13; Kassin Bay, a part of the Alaska Marine Highway; and the community of Hollis.

This roadless area was inventoried as Variety Class B, which possesses landscape characteristics common for the character type. The Existing Visual Condition (EVC) for approximately 67 percent of this area was listed as EVC I. Land in EVC I displays a natural landscape that has remained unaltered by human activity. Approximately 11 percent of the area was inventoried in EVC III, in which the average person notices changes in the landscape, but they do not attract significant attention. Another 13 percent of the area was rated as EVC IV, in which changes in the landscape are easily noticed by the average visitor, and may attract some attention. Approximately 9 percent of this roadless area is categorized in EVC V, where changes to the landscape are obvious to the average visitor.

**(7) Social, Cultural, and Historical Values:** The Polk Inlet and Twelvemile Arm areas were important locales of traditional use by the Haida Native people and before them, prehistoric cultures. The Kaigani Haida are

recognized as having the rights to much of the lower half of Prince of Wales Island at historic contact (USDA Forest Service, 1995). The two remaining Haida villages are located just outside the roadless area at Hydaburg and Kasaan. Historic use of Twelvemile Arm included hunting, trapping, fishing, and gardening. Most of these activities were concentrated around the Harris River and the present day location of Hollis (USDA Forest Service, 1995). The Haida Native Corporation made large land entitlement selections to the south of the roadless area and the Sealaska Native Corporation owns land along the northeastern border.

The Twelvemile area has historically been a primary entry to Prince of Wales Island. The community of Hollis lies less than 1 mile north of the roadless area. Hollis began as a mining community, but it soon became the boat entry terminal through Kasaan Bay. Currently, Hollis is the only Alaska Marine Highway stop on the Prince of Wales Island. Mining, trading/supply, boat repair, and, more recently, timber and tourism, have been the influences on the general vicinity of the roadless area. Dispersed recreation is an important use in this area. The convenient road and boat accesses have made such places as the Harris River, Indian Creek, Twelvemile Arm, and other streams and waterways popular fishing and hunting places.

Available information indicates that substantial subsistence activities occur in the area, especially along Twelvemile Arm and near the adjacent road system. The area is important to residents of Hollis, Klawock, Craig, Hydaburg, and Kasaan, as well as other Prince of Wales Island communities. VCUs 621 and 624, along Twelvemile Arm and in the southwestern portion of the area, were listed among the VCUs with the highest community fish and wildlife values by ADF&G (1998). VCUs 620 and 622 were listed in the third group of most important VCUs. All VCUs in the roadless area were listed among those VCUs with the highest sensitivity to disturbance of subsistence use areas (ADF&G, 1998).

**(8) Manageability as Wilderness and Boundary Conditions/Changes:** The boundaries of the area are partly natural, consisting of the saltwater of Twelvemile Arm. However, most of the boundaries consist of developed areas, many of which penetrate the roadless area. Because of the degree of fragmentation, the proximity of ongoing management activities, and the proximity of the town of Hollis, the area would be difficult to manage as wilderness.

### **III. Availability for Management as Wilderness (including effects of wilderness designation on adjacent areas)**

**(1) Recreation, including Tourism Potential:** There is some opportunity to manage this area for developed and dispersed recreation. There is opportunity and an identified need for trails. There is potential to place a public recreation cabin on One Duck Trail to promote winter recreation in the area. Twelvemile Arm just outside the roadless area, has been identified as a potential area to develop a campground and/or walk-in public recreation cabin.

The proximity of this area to Hollis, the Prince of Wales Island road system, and to Ketchikan, coupled with the variety of recreation opportunities offered by the area, have caused recreation management to be highlighted in the long-term planning for management of this area.

**(2) Subsistence Uses:** The existing patterns of subsistence activities in the area would not be affected by wilderness designation or management in an unroaded condition.

**(3) Fish Resources:** The recently completed fish habitat inventory indicates that there is excellent potential for salmon enhancement projects, such as constructing fish passes, on several of the streams within the area. The Old Franks drainage has had fish enhancement activities. Two fish ladders exist in the vicinity of Mary's Lake.

**(4) Wildlife Resources:** There are no long-range plans for wildlife habitat improvement projects.

**(5) Timber Resources:** There are 11,532 acres mapped as productive old growth in the roadless area. In addition, 980 acres mapped as second-growth forest have resulted from beach and helicopter logging. Of these acres, 8,671 acres are categorized as tentatively suitable for timber production. Based on the current Forest Plan LUDs, (and estimated falldown and scheduling reduction factors), 1,035 acres or 3 percent of this roadless area are

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estimated to be suitable for timber production. Approximately 218 of the suitable acres are mapped as high-volume old growth; of these acres, 14 are mapped as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth.

Timber harvest has been occurring along much of the perimeter of the roadless area for many years causing it to shrink in size. The Polk Inlet Project (USDA Forest Service, 1995) has recently been implemented and has reduced the size of the area. Good potential exists to manage much of this area for its timber potential.

- (6) **Fire, Insects, and Disease:** The area has no significant fire history, insects, and disease. Endemic tree diseases common to Southeast Alaska are present.
- (7) **Minerals:** Mineral development potential is very low. This area contains 4,658 acres of land identified as a mineral activity tract with 3,932 acres having high and 726 acres having low potential for experiencing mineral exploration and development of locatable minerals (Coldwell, 1990; USDA Forest Service, 1991). In addition, this area contains 34,333 acres of undiscovered locatable mineral resources (Brew et al., 1990; USDA Forest Service, 1991) that are considered to have low potential for development.
- (8) **Transportation and Utilities:** There are existing roads adjacent to the area, which tie into the island road system. No transportation or utility corridors are planned for this area other than for the harvest of local timber.
- (9) **Water Availability and Use:** There are no developed recreation cabins or other facilities to create a water demand. There are no existing or planned hydroelectric or domestic water projects within the roadless area.
- (10) **Areas of Scientific Interest:** The area contains no Research Natural Areas. The area has not been specifically identified for any scientific studies.
- (11) **Land Use Authorizations:** There are no land use authorizations currently within this roadless area.
- (12) **Land Status:** About 23 acres, primarily located along the perimeter of the area, are non-National Forest System land. A small tract in the southern part of the roadless area is part of a large encumbered area adjacent to land owned by the Sealaska Regional Corporation.

### IV. Wilderness Evaluation (Need for Wilderness)

- (1) **Public and Congressional Interest:**
  - (a) **Interest Expressed by Local Users and Residents:** The area receives local use for subsistence and recreation activity.
  - (b) **Congressional Interest:** Two bills from the U.S. House of Representatives included wilderness proposals for Southeast Alaska. In 1989, HR 987 did not include this area. In 2001, HR 2908 did not propose the area for wilderness, but did propose it to be classified as a Congressionally Designated LUD II area and managed in an unroaded condition.
  - (c) **Public Input During Forest Plan Revisions and Appeals:** No specific recommendations for wilderness were made. A group of Hollis residents proposed a “bio-buffer” around Hollis, including parts of VCUs 621 and 622 in the roadless area. Several commenters requested that Indian Creek be managed for primitive recreation or as a natural area. Other commenters believed that Management Area K17, which covers most of the roadless area, should remain in timber production.
  - (d) **Public Input During Roadless Area Conservation Rule and Road Management Policy Review:** This area was not specifically identified in the comments received on the Roadless Area Conservation Rule or Road Management Policy Review. However, some commenters wanted all unroaded lands in the Tongass to be protected from development.

**(e) Public Input Expressed for Project-level EISs and Other Input:** Some comments on the Polk Inlet Project desired no new roads in the project area, including the roadless area. Others supported continued timber harvest and road development.

**(f) Public Input Expressed During Supplemental EIS Process:** SEACC recommended this area for permanent protection through LUD II designation. The Alaska Rainforest Campaign (a coalition of national and Alaska conservation groups) recommended Roadless Area 534 for permanent protection as LUD II.

**(2) Nearby Roadless and Wilderness Areas and Uses:** The Twelvemile Roadless Area is not directly connected to any other unroaded areas. It is separated from the nearby Kasaan Bay (536), Soda Bay (505), and McKenzie (519) Roadless Areas by roaded areas. The Karta Wilderness and associated Roadless Area (510) is located approximately 2 miles to the northwest across Twelvemile Arm. The South Prince of Wales Wilderness is located 15 miles to the south.

**(3) Distance From Population Centers (Accessibility):** Approximate distances from population centers are as follows:

Community	Air Miles	Water Miles
Juneau (Pop. 30,711)	210	230
Ketchikan (Pop. 14,070)	40	45
Wrangell (Pop. 2,308)	90	180
Petersberg (Pop. 3,324)	110	180

The nearest stop on the Alaska Marine Highway is Hollis.

**(4) Relative Contribution to the National Wilderness Preservation System:** The Twelvemile Roadless Area is located on the east-central part of Prince of Wales Island. It is bounded by roaded areas with the exception that Twelvemile Arm occupies part of the northern border. The roadless area is characterized by moderate topography. Most of this roadless area consists of rolling terrain; however, there are a few higher ridges with elevations ranging to above 2,400 feet. Old Franks and Indian Creeks are the largest streams occupying portions of the area.

The area itself is mostly unmodified, however it is influenced by nearby developments. The natural integrity and apparent naturalness of the area is moderate. The opportunity for solitude and primitive recreation is moderate.

None of the landscape is considered distinctive for the character type from a scenery standpoint. There are no known ecologic, geologic, scientific, or cultural features of significance in this roadless area.

The roadless area includes about 5,031 acres of high-volume, old-growth forest. Of these acres, approximately 1,453 are mapped as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth.

The Twelvemile Roadless Area is in the North Central Prince of Wales Island Biogeographic Province and makes up about 2 percent of the province. It is one of 15 inventoried roadless areas (small parts of four other roadless areas area in the province) found in the province and that make up about 44 percent of the province. The Karta River Wilderness represents about 3 percent of the province. This province also contains the Mt. Calder-Mt. Holbrook, Pt. Baker-Port Protection, and the Salmon Bay Congressionally-designated LUD II areas, which make up about 5 percent of the area, and are managed to remain roadless.

The Twelvemile Roadless Area lies within two ecological sections; it represents 4 percent of the Prince of Wales Mountains Ecological Section and 0.1 percent of the Kupreanof Lowlands Ecological Section. These ecological sections contain relatively low representation in existing wilderness (8 and 1 percent, respectively) and LUD II (3 and 1 percent, respectively), but are well represented in other existing non-development LUDs (22 and 33 percent, respectively).

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Nearly all (98 percent) of the roadless area is in the Central Prince of Wales Volcanics Ecological Subsection; this portion of the roadless area represents 7 percent of the entire ecological subsection. Approximately 8 percent of this ecological subsection is located in existing wilderness and another 23 percent is protected by other existing non-development LUDs. The Skowl Arm Till Lowlands Ecological Subsection covers 2 percent of the roadless area; this portion of the roadless area represents 1 percent of the entire ecological subsection, none of which is in existing wilderness or LUD II, but 29 percent is protected by other existing non-development LUDs. Less than 1 percent of the roadless area is in the Hetta Inlet Metasediments Ecological Subsection. This portion represents less than 0.1 percent of the entire ecological subsection, 2 percent of which is in existing wilderness, 9 percent in LUD II, and 14 percent is protected by other existing non-development LUDs.

The Twelvemile Roadless Area is rated at 16 out of a possible 28 points under the Wilderness Attribute Rating System (WARS). As such, its WARS rating is ranked 98<sup>th</sup> from the highest (along with 4 other roadless areas) among the 109 Tongass inventoried roadless areas.

There is some local and national support for managing this roadless area in an unroaded condition, but little support for designating it as wilderness. There are no known ecologic, geologic, scientific, or cultural features of significance in this roadless area. The degree of timber harvest in adjacent lands adds importance to the old growth within the roadless area. Designation of the area would add Congressional protection to about 1 percent of the Skowl Arm Till Lowlands Ecological Subsection, none of which is currently in wilderness or LUD II. Overall, the factors identified here indicate that the relative contribution of this area to the National Wilderness Preservation System would be low.

### **V. Environmental Consequences**

The Twelvemile Roadless Area would be managed under the existing Forest Plan if Alternative 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 7 is implemented. About 58 percent of the roadless area would be managed under non-development LUDs. Timber harvest and road development could occur within the remaining 42 percent of the roadless area. The land in the development LUDs includes an estimated 1,035 acres that are suitable for timber production (2 percent of the suitable acres on the Craig Ranger District). Approximately 14 of the suitable acres are classified as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. Timber sales authorized under the Polk Inlet FEIS would continue, including those that are under contract. This area contains 4,658 acres of land identified as a mineral activity tract with 3,932 acres having high and 726 having low potential for experiencing mineral exploration and development of locatable minerals. In addition, this area contains 34,333 acres of undiscovered locatable mineral resources that are considered to have low potential for development. Recreation and special use programs would continue. The values associated with the natural settings of the roadless area could be affected by ongoing developments allowed by the Forest Plan.

Under Alternative 6, the entire roadless area would be converted to Recommended LUD II. Mineral prospecting and development, special uses, and recreation programs would continue. No timber harvest would be allowed. The values associated with the natural settings of the roadless area, including the old growth values, would be provided long-term protection if designated LUD II. Designation of the area would add Congressional protection to about 1 percent of the Skowl Arm Till Lowlands Ecological Subsection, none of which is currently in wilderness or LUD II.

With Alternative 8, the entire roadless area would be converted to Recommended Wilderness. Mineral prospecting and development, special uses, and recreation programs could be restricted. Mineral prospecting would be allowed up to the time that the area is actually designated as wilderness by Congress. No timber harvest would be allowed. The values associated with the natural settings of the roadless area, including the old growth values, would be provided long-term protection if designated wilderness. Designation of the area would add Congressional protection to about 1 percent of the Skowl Arm Till Lowlands Ecological Subsection, none of which is currently in wilderness or LUD II.

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Land Use Designation Allocations and Suitable Timber Lands by Alternative for Roadless Area 534 (in acres)								
Land Use Designation	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7	Alt 8
Recommended Wilderness								34,333
Wilderness								
Recommended Wilderness Nat. Mon.								
Wilderness National Monument								
Non-wilderness National Monument								
Research Natural Area								
Special Interest Area								
Remote Recreation								
Enacted Municipal Watershed								
Old-growth Habitat	19,780	19,780	19,780	19,780	19,780		19,780	
Semi-remote Recreation	3	3	3	3	3		3	
Recommended LUD II						34,333		
LUD II						0		
Wild, Scenic, Recreational River								
Experimental Forest								
Scenic Viewshed	62	62	62	62	62		62	
Modified Landscape	720	720	720	720	720		720	
Timber production	13,769	13,769	13,769	13,769	13,769		13,769	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>34,333</b>	<b>34,333</b>	<b>34,333</b>	<b>34,333</b>	<b>34,333</b>	<b>34,333</b>	<b>34,333</b>	<b>34,333</b>
Suitable Timber Lands	1,035	1,035	1,035	1,035	1,035	0	1,035	0