INDIVIDUAL ROADLESS AREA DESCRIPTION

ROADLESS AREA NAME: Juneau Urban (305)

ACRES (NFS): 94.800

BIOGEOGRAPHIC PROVINCE: Lynn Canal, Northern Coast Range, and Ice Fields

ECOLOGICAL SECTION: Boundary Ranges, and Kootznoowoo Fjordlands

2003 WILDERNESS ATTRIBUTE RATING: 21

I. Overview and Description

(1) Location and Access: This irregularly shaped area, located on the mainland near Juneau, extends north from the Lemon Creek area to Point Bridget State Park and Echo Cove. The closest community, Juneau, located immediately south, has regularly scheduled air service and is serviced by the Alaska Marine Highway. Land owned by the Borough and City of Juneau borders the area to the south. Land uses in this adjacent area tend to be urban in nature and there are roads in much of the area. The area is bordered to the east by the Skagway-Juneau Icefield Roadless Area. Glacier Highway, which runs generally north to south from Juneau to Echo Cove, is located along the west shoreline and provides relatively easy access to the entire area.

Glacier Highway and a number of roads in the Juneau area provide access to this roadless area. There are also a number of trails leading into the area. These include the Heintzleman Ridge Route, Montana Creek (#511), West Glacier (#513), Spaulding (#547) and Auke Nu (#680) trails, which originate along the south border of the area. The Peterson Lake (#535), Windfall Lake (#494), Herbert Glacier (#480), Amalga (#447), Yankee Basin, and Bessie Creek (#565) trails are accessed from Glacier Highway, which generally borders the west side of the roadless area. Juneau Airport is located south of this area.

(2) History: The Juneau Urban Roadless Area has a long history of inhabitation. Tlingit Natives lived in the area long before the Gold Rush days. Goldschmidt and Haas (1946) identified a variety of aboriginal uses along the shoreline adjacent to this roadless area, including salmon fishing and berrying, as well as smokehouse or cabin sites. The Gold Rush began in 1880 and spurred the rapid establishment of Juneau. Mining activities that flourished in that era diminished during World War II because of fixed gold prices, wartime inflation, and labor shortages. Increased participation in outdoor recreational pursuits and tourism opportunities began to take place in those areas that were historically accessed and developed by mining ventures. Current recreation use is generally high in this area and activities include hiking, fishing, hunting, picnicking, viewing scenery, mountaineering on glaciers, and other recreational activities. A recent surge in mineral exploration and development is currently underway.

(3) Geography and Topography: The area is generally characterized as being mountainous, forested, and, in places, deeply incised with steep-walled, glacially scoured valleys that extend from sea level to the Juneau Icefield. Glaciers and icefalls are the most dramatic features and, combined with the surrounding ridges of over 3,000 to 4,000 feet, provide topographic relief and extraordinary beauty. The area includes only 1 mile of saltwater shoreline, because the land along the coastline is either city and borough land or privately owned and/or roaded. A large part of the area is either ice and snow (11,946 acres), rock (13,731 acres), or alpine (1,971 acres). There are 387 acres of freshwater lakes in this area.

(4) Ecosystem:

(a) Classification: Biogeographic Province. This area is located in three biogeographic provinces (Lynn Canal, Northern Coast Range, and Ice Fields). The majority of the area is located within the Lynn Canal Province. The topography in this area is typically rugged and glaciated. Rain shadows and the dominating influence of the continental climate make this the driest and seasonally warmest province in Southeast Alaska. Part of the southern portion of the area is located within the Northern Coast Range Province, which is characterized by little maritime influence and rugged and glaciated topography. A small

area along the east side of the Juneau Urban Roadless Area boundary is located within the Ice Fields Province, which is generally characterized by permanent ice fields, active glaciers, and nunatuks (mountain peaks between glaciers).

Ecological Section/Subsection. The Juneau Urban Roadless Area is divided almost equally between two Ecological Sections: Kootznoowoo Fjordlands (M247D) and Boundary Ranges. (M246B). These areas are represented by two ecological subsections, each covering about half of the area (see table below). The Stephens Passage Glaciomarine Terraces Ecological Subsection contains glaciomarine terraces that grade into mountain slopes. Estuaries and marshes can be found along the coastal areas of the terraces while hemlock-spruce forests dominate the mountain slopes. The second ecological subsection, Boundary Ranges Icefields, is underlain by a northwest-southeast trending batholith of resistant granite and granodiorite. This portion of the range consists of a discontinuous mix of icefields and glaciers separated by river valleys and pierced by nunataks and scree fields. Forests comprise a minor part of the vegetation along rivers (Nowacki et al., 2001).

Ecological Section	Ecological Subsection	Percent of Roadless Area
Kootznoowoo Fjordlands	Stephens Passage Glaciomarine Terraces	55%
Boundary Ranges	Boundary Ranges Icefields	45%

(b) Soils: Alpine portions of this area consist of shallow to bedrock soils primarily of organic and mineral origin. The majority of the area's soils range from well-developed, deep, colluvial soils on moderate to steep slopes; shallow to bedrock colluvial soils that are well-drained and developed on very steep slopes; and poorly drained mineral and/or organic soils on benches and moderate slopes. Muskeg occurs on some of these benches. The entire area has been overridden by glaciers with a predominance of glacial materials throughout, but especially on middle to lower slopes.

(c) Vegetation: Hemlock/spruce rain forests, muskegs, alder thickets, alpine slopes, and riparian zones can be found in this diverse area. There are 1,971 acres of alpine vegetation that have been mapped in the Juneau Urban Roadless Area. Approximately 1,056 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 57,013 acres mapped as forest land, of which 34,833 acres (61 percent) are mapped as productive old-growth forest. Of the productive old growth, 14,013 acres or 40 percent are mapped as high-volume old-growth forest. The productive old growth includes about 3,264 acres of high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. There is no second growth due to timber harvest mapped in the area.

(d) Fish Resources: The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) rated fish resources in its Forest Habitat Integrity Program (1983). These ratings describe the value of VCUs for sport fish, commercial fish, and estuaries. Seven VCUs in the area were rated as high value for sport fish. Three of these VCUs were also rated as high value for commercial fish, with one also identified as a high value estuary. The Tongass Fish and Wildlife Resource Assessment (ADF&G, 1998) listed six VCUs as having high sportfish productivity and three VCUs as primary pink salmon producers.

Coho, chum, and pink salmon are found in this area along with Dolly Varden, steelhead, and cutthroat trout. The major fish bearing streams include Eagle and Herbert Rivers, Cowee Creek, and Montana Creek.

(e) Wildlife Resources: Wildlife populations are typical of the mainland areas surrounding Juneau and include numerous waterfowl and upland birds, deer, and wolves. Mountain goats occupy the higher elevations during summer months, generally moving to lower elevations during heavy snow periods. Furbearers are found throughout the area, as are both black and brown bear.

(5) Management Direction and Current Uses: This area was allocated to seven Land Use Designations (LUDs), under the 1997 Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan. These seven LUDs are Scenic Viewshed, Minerals, Transportation and Utility System (TUS), Semi-remote Recreation, Remote Recreation, Special Interest Area, and Old-growth Habitat. Both the TUS and Minerals LUDs are secondary LUDs, which overlay the other land uses.

LUD	Acres
Scenic Viewshed	25,962
Minerals*	45,329*
Transportation and Utility System	NA
Semi-remote Recreation	49,526
Remote Recreation	9,167
Special Interest Area	6,722
Old-growth Habitat	3,422

* Note that acres in the Minerals LUD are included in the Scenic Viewshed, Semi-remote Recreation, and Old-Growth LUD acres.

Approximately 27 percent of this roadless area (not including the LUD overlays) was allocated to one development LUD, Scenic Viewshed. Approximately 48 percent of the roadless area was allocated to the Minerals LUD overlay. In addition, an electric transmission line corridor running the length of the area was assigned to the Transportation and Utility System LUD overlay. The 1997 LUD map identifies both an existing and a potential transmission line corridor in this area.

Approximately 73 percent of the roadless area was allocated to non-development LUDs (Semi-remote Recreation, Remote Recreation, Special Interest Area, Old-growth Habitat). Most of the roadless area, approximately 52 percent, was allocated to the Semi-remote Recreation LUD. Approximately 10 percent of the roadless area was allocated to the Remote Recreation LUD. Approximately 7 percent of the roadless area, around Mendenhall Lake, area was allocated to the Special Interest Area (SIA) LUD. This SIA is known as the Mendenhall Glacier Recreation Area. Approximately 4 percent of this roadless area was allocated to the Old-growth Habitat LUD.

The Juneau Urban Roadless Area is heavily used for recreation. Glacier Highway and a number of roads in the Juneau area provide access to this roadless area. Public recreation facilities include four public recreation cabins and a number of trails that provide access to the area. Five trails provide access from the south side of the area. Six other trails provide access from Glacier Highway, which generally borders the area to the west. Part of the Mendenhall Glacier Recreation area is included in this roadless area and includes some of the most used trails on the north part of the Forest. A major visitor center and large campground are within the Recreation Area and adjacent to this roadless area.

Many of the special use permits in the area are associated with recreational outfitter and guide activities. In 1987, management guidelines for helicopter landing tours on the Juneau Icefield were developed and several helicopter companies are currently authorized to conduct landing tours on the Icefield and glaciers within this roadless area. The Forest Service has authorized commercial helicopter landing tours on the Juneau Icefield from 2003 through 2007. Icefield landing sites within or immediately adjacent to this area include Mendenhall, Herbert, and Eagle Glaciers. Guided rafting trips are permitted across Mendenhall Lake to access Mendenhall River.

There are Special Use Permits for communication sites for AT&T on Mt. Bessy and for Auck Mountain. The Forest Service also uses Auck Mountain as a communication site. The 1997 Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan allocated a site on Heintzleman Ridge for a future communication site for television, radio, or cellular telephone towers and buildings.

There is a Special Use Permit for an access road on National Forest System land issued to Glacier Gardens, a popular local attraction. The Tongass Fish and Wildlife Resource Assessment (ADF&G, 1998) indicated that with the exception of parts of VCUs 23 (Canyon Creek) and 24 (Cowee Creek), the Juneau Urban Roadless Area is typically not used for subsistence.

Two fish enhancement projects, completed in 1990, established several small rearing ponds adjacent to the Eagle River, and introduced large woody debris into the Windfall Creek channel. A fishpass was completed at Lena Cove in 1992.

(6) Appearance (Apparent Naturalness): The area offers spectacular scenery and opportunities to view wildlife and vegetation. However, existing modifications and ongoing activities are apparent to visitors and affect the natural appearance of this area. Existing modifications in the area include trails, recreation cabins, and historic mining remains. Ongoing activities include helicopter landing tours.

The area is visible from a number of locations including several Visual Priority Routes and Use Areas, which are identified in Section II (6). Visual Priority Routes include Lynn Canal and Favorite Channel, which are both part of the Alaska Marine Highway, as well as several public use roads, including Glacier Highway. The area is also visible from a number of Use Areas, including Mendenhall Recreation Area and the public recreation cabins and hiking trails within the area.

(7) Surroundings (External Influences): External influences that affect this roadless area include the Juneau Road System and the Borough and City of Juneau, the numerous flight paths and air traffic in the area, and an urban population that uses the area extensively. In addition, the area is bordered to the west by Glacier Highway property owned by Native Corporations and other private entities. Gastineau Channel and Lynn Canal, both busy waterways for ferries, cruise ships, and private and commercial vessels, are visible from locations within the area.

(8) Attractions and Features of Special Interest: The natural features of the area, the scenery, and the opportunity to see wildlife and to study the processes that formed this country are all attractions. The proximity to the Juneau Icefield and the numerous glaciers offer unparalleled scenery and opportunities for mountaineering, skiing, ice and rock climbing, camping, and scenic viewing. The Mendenhall Glacier Recreation Area at the southern end of the roadless area, adjacent to Juneau, was designated as a Special Interest Area to recognize these assets and may be managed to promote public use as well as scientific research. In total, the area contains 18 inventoried recreation places, which cover 49,882 acres, or 53 percent of the roadless area.

High-quality fishing opportunities in the streams and lakes are also an attraction. There are numerous improved trails in the area and four public recreation cabins.

An area near the junction of Cowee Creek and Canyon Creek has been declared a landmark tree site as part of the Landmark Trees Project on the Tongass National Forest. This area had one of the highest scoring Old-Growth Tree sites recorded on the Forest. Another site, near Windfall Lake, was lower in the scoring.

(9) Differences between the 1989 and 2003 Roadless Area Boundary: The boundaries of this roadless area have changed in three ways between 1989 and 2003. First, the section of the Glacier Highway that follows the coastline at Fairhaven is now excluded from the area. As a result, the roadless area no longer includes any saltwater shoreline area. Second, the north boundary of the area has been altered to exclude an area designated LUD II in the Tongass Timber Reform Act that is now part of Roadless Area 301. Third, several adjustments were made to the boundary between the Draft and Final SEIS to improve manageability in those areas. Most notable of these adjustments include dropping the area generally south of Mendenhall Lake from the roadless area.

II. Capability for Management as Wilderness

(1) Natural Integrity and Apparent Naturalness: The area is modified by public recreation cabins, numerous trails, and past and present mining claims. In addition, air traffic by regularly scheduled air operators, flightseeing tours, and helicopter landing tours all affect natural ecological processes and conditions within the area. Despite these developments within the area, the majority of the area appears natural and its natural integrity is high. This characteristic, coupled with the area's high scenic and recreation values and its proximity to Juneau, suggest that much of the roadless area may be appropriate and valuable for wilderness.

(2) Opportunity for Solitude and Serenity, Self-reliance, Adventure, Challenging Experiences, and Primitive Recreation: There is not a moderate opportunity for solitude and a high opportunity for primitive recreation in this area, especially when the adjacent roadless lands are factored in. Frequent air traffic by jets, small planes, and helicopters is usually present. Noise from the Juneau Road System can be heard in much of the area. The trails and public recreation cabins in the area are generally considered to be highly used, and contact with other users is common.

There are four public recreation cabins in the area, and numerous trails, which tend to focus recreational use in the area. Hunters and fishers also use the area quite extensively.

The Mendenhall Glacier Recreation Area at the southern end of the roadless area provides unparalleled scenery and opportunities for mountaineering, skiing, and ice and rock climbing. It is managed to maintain a natural or near natural setting and may be managed to promote public use.

The area provides primarily Primitive and Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized 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
Primitive (P)	36,779	39%
Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized (SPNM)	38,703	41%
Semi-Primitive Motorized (SPM)	14,456	15%
Roaded Natural (RN)	3,974	4%
Roaded Modified (RM)	406	0%
Rural (R)	129	0%
Urban (U)	174	0%

The area contains 18 inventoried recreation places, which cover 49,882 acres, or 53 percent of the roadless area.

ROS Class	# of Rec. Places*	Total Acres
P	0	0
SPNM	5	33,631
SPM	4	14,093
RN	7	1,449
RM	3	406
R	2	128
U	1	174

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

Recreation attractions just west of the roadless area include Point Bridgett State Park, Gruening State Historic Park, Mendenhall Wetlands State Game Refuge, and Tee Harbor.

(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).

The inventoried roadless areas of the Tongass National Forest were rated according to this system in 1989 for the original Analysis of the Management Situation developed in support of the Forest Plan Revision. At that time, the Juneau Urban Roadless Area was given a rating of 17 out of 28 possible points. The rating was re-evaluated for this updated version of the Analysis of the Management Situation. Based on this re-evaluation, the area was given a rating of 21. This rating reflects the high natural integrity and apparent naturalness of the area, despite the very high use level, which occurs within and near the area.

(4) Ecologic and Geologic Values:

(a) Fish Resources: The Tongass Fish and Wildlife Resource Assessment (ADF&G, 1998) listed VCUs 24, 25, 27, 28, and 29, along Lynn Canal, as primary sportfish producers. VCUs 26, 27, and 28 were also identified as primary salmon producers (ADF&G, 1998).

Coho, chum, and pink salmon are found in this area along with Dolly Varden, steelhead, and cutthroat trout.

Cowee Creek and Herbert River are the most productive streams in this system, with an estimated annual peak escapement of 13,200, and 4,400 pink salmon, respectively. Montana Creek and Herbert River have excellent coho salmon smolt production capability (ADF&G, 1998).

Two fish enhancement projects, completed in 1990, established several small rearing ponds adjacent to the Eagle River, and introduced large woody debris into the Windfall Creek channel. A fishpass was completed at Lena Cove in 1992.

(b) Wildlife Resources: Wildlife populations are typical of the mainland areas surrounding Juneau and include numerous waterfowl and upland birds. Sitka black-tailed deer populations are affected by severe winter conditions and generally high predator populations. Mountain goats occupy the higher elevations during summer months, generally moving to lower elevations during heavy snow periods. Furbearers are found throughout the area, as are wolves and both black and brown bear. Based on harvest data compiled from 1985 to 1994, one of the VCUs partially located in this area (VCU 25, along the coast) was identified within the second 25 percent of black bear harvest areas on the Tongass (ADF&G 1998).

Moose have not been reported in this area. Two species of peregrine falcon may migrate through the area.

(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, eight sensitive plant species are known or suspected to occur in the Juneau Ranger District.

(d) Karst, Cave, and Other Geologic Resources: There are no known karst or cave resources in this roadless area. Glaciers in this area include parts of Eagle, Herbert, and Mendenhall Glaciers. There are no other known unique geologic features.

(5) Scientific and Educational Values: The glaciers and surrounding scenery are the most significant special features of the area. There are no existing or proposed Research Natural Areas within the area. Mendenhall Glacier Recreation Area, which is partially within the area, has been identified as a Special Interest Area. This designation is intended to protect areas with unique cultural, geological, botanical, zoological, recreational, scenic, or other special features.

(6) Scenic Values: The area offers spectacular scenery and opportunities to view wildlife and vegetation. Glaciers and icefalls are the most dramatic features and, combined with the surrounding ridges of over 3,000 to 4,000 feet, provide topographic relief of extraordinary beauty. Mendenhall Glacier Recreation Area, just north of Juneau, was established to recognize these values and may be managed for public use as well as scientific research. However, existing modifications and ongoing activities are apparent to visitors and affect the natural appearance of this roadless area. Existing modifications in the area include trails, recreation cabins, and historic mining remains. Ongoing activities include helicopter landing tours.

A number of Visual Priority Routes and Use Areas identified by the Forest Plan are within or adjacent to the Juneau Urban Roadless Area. Visual Priority Routes include Lynn Canal (Alaska Marine Highway and Tourship Route), Favorite Channel (Alaska Marine Highway and Small Boat Route), and Glacier Highway (FH#2), Mendenhall Glacier Road (FH#37), Montana Creek Road (#8452), and Peterson Creek Road (#8442) (Public Use Roads). Use Areas include Shelter Island (State Marine Park), Favorite Channel (Saltwater Use Area), Echo Cove/Sawmill Cove and Shelter Island (Dispersed Recreation Areas), Juneau (Community), Peterson Lake, John Muir, Eagle Glacier, and Windfall Lake cabins (Public Recreation Cabins), Mendenhall Recreation Area, Auke Village Campground, and Auke Bay Recreation Area (Developed Recreation Areas), Montana Creek (#511), West Glacier (#513), Auke Nu (#680), Peterson Lake (#535), Windfall Lake (#494), Herbert Glacier (#480), Amalga (#447), Yankee Basin, Spaulding (#547), and Bessie Creek (#565) (Hiking Trails), and Auke Bay and Echo Cove (Boat Anchorages).

Approximately 44 percent of the area was inventoried in Variety Class A (possessing landscape diversity that is unique for the character type) and 39 percent of the acreage was inventoried in Variety Class B (possessing landscape diversity that is common for the character type). Approximately 16 percent was categorized in Variety Class C (possessing a low degree of landscape diversity).

The vast majority (98 percent) of this roadless area is in Existing Visual Condition (EVC) I and appears untouched by human activity. Approximately 1 percent of the area appears to be untouched by human activity and is in EVC Type II. Another 1 percent is in EVC III. These areas are where changes in the landscape are noticed by the average person but do not attract attention. The natural appearance of the landscape still remains dominant.

(7) Social, Cultural, and Historical Values: The Juneau Urban area has a long history of habitation. Tlingit Natives lived in the area long before the Gold Rush days which began in 1880 and spurred the rapid establishment of Juneau. Mining activities that flourished in that era diminished during World War II because of fixed gold prices, wartime inflation, and labor shortages. Increased participation in outdoor recreational pursuits and tourism opportunities began to take place in those areas which were originally accessed and developed, in previous years, by mining ventures. A recent surge in mineral exploration and development is currently underway. The closest community is the City of Juneau, located immediately south.

The area receives heavy recreation use. Public recreation facilities include four public recreation cabins and a number of trails that provide access to the area. Five trails provide access from the south side of the area. Six other trails provide access from Glacier Highway, which generally borders the area to the west. Hunters and fishers also use the area quite extensively. There was no outfitter/guide use identified in the area in 1999. Part of the Mendenhall Glacier Recreation area is included in this roadless area and includes some of the most used trails on the north part of the forest. A major visitor center and large campground are within the Recreation Area and adjacent to this roadless area. The Forest Service has authorized commercial helicopter landing tours on the Juneau Icefield from 2003 through 2007. Icefield landing sites within or immediately adjacent to this area include Mendenhall, Herbert, and Eagle Glaciers. Guided rafting trips are permitted across Mendenhall Lake to access Mendenhall River. Guided hiking has also become popular in the area.

Based on harvest data compiled from 1985 to 1994, one of the VCUs partially located in this area (VCU 25) was identified within the top 25 percent of black bear harvest areas on the Tongass. Three other VCUs that are all or partially within the area (VCUs 24, 26, and 27) were identified in the second 25 percent.

The Tongass Fish and Wildlife Resource Assessment indicated that with the exception of parts of VCUs 23 (Canyon Creek) and 24 (Cowee Creek), the Juneau Urban Roadless Area is typically not used for subsistence. Two of the VCUs partially located in this area (VCUs 23 and 24 in the northern part of the roadless area) were included among the highest value community use areas. No VCUs were listed among the VCUs with highest sensitivity to disturbance of subsistence use areas (ADF&G, 1998).

(8) Manageability and Boundary Conditions/Changes: The area is adjacent to the Skagway-Juneau Icefield Roadless Area and, because of the nature of the glaciers and Icefield, the areas covered with glaciers and ice at the higher elevations will undoubtedly remain roadless. The Juneau Urban Roadless Area generally falls below the 3,000 to 4,000-foot elevation of the Juneau Icefield. Boundaries formed by City and Borough of Juneau lands are less well defined and are not easily locatable on the ground. The lower elevation area, which is affected by easy access from the Juneau Road System and Glacier Highway, could be more difficult to manage as wilderness.

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

(1) Recreation, Including Tourism Potential: The spectacular scenery, relatively easy access to the area, and opportunity to view and/or harvest fish and wildlife make this roadless area very attractive and provides almost unlimited recreation potential. Recreation opportunities include both developed and dispersed projects.

(2) Subsistence Uses: The existing patterns of subsistence activities in the area would not be affected by wilderness designation.

(3) Fish Resource: Two fish enhancement projects, completed in 1990, established several small rearing ponds adjacent to the Eagle River, and introduced large woody debris into the Windfall Creek channel. A fishpass was completed at Lena Cove in 1992. No new fish enhancement projects are currently proposed.

(4) Wildlife Resources: There are no wildlife habitat enhancement projects currently proposed in this roadless area.

(5) Timber Resources: There are approximately 34,833 acres mapped as productive old growth and no acres mapped as second growth due to harvest in the roadless area. Of these acres, 28,161 acres are categorized as tentatively suitable for timber production. Based on the Forest Plan LUDs assigned to this area (and estimated falldown and scheduling reduction factors), 3,256 acres (3 percent) of this roadless area are estimated to be suitable for timber production. Approximately 1,250 of the suitable acres are mapped as high-volume old growth; of these acres, 200 are mapped as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth.

The Cowee-Davies Timber Sale, located in this roadless area, was halted during the appeal process because the court deemed an environmental impact statement necessary. Timber sales within this area would be controversial because of its proximity to Juneau and the high recreation use of the area.

Designating this area wilderness would not be likely to affect potential timber harvest activities in nearby areas because it would not block any potential transportation routes. Glacier Highway borders the area to the west and timber harvest is unlikely to occur in the Skagway-Juneau Icefield Roadless Area to the east.

(6) Fire, Insects, and Disease: The area has no significant fire history. Endemic tree diseases common to Southeast Alaska are present. There are no known epidemic disease occurrences.

(7) Minerals: This area encompasses much of what is known as the Juneau Gold Belt and is recognized as an area of high mineral development potential, priority one. Over 85 mining claims are within or adjacent to the Eagle and Herbert River corridors and many others are located in Yankee Basin.

The west portion of the area was allocated to the Minerals LUD, which is a secondary designation that overlays one or more primary LUD designations. The Minerals LUD is intended to encourage the prospecting, exploration, development, mining, and processing of locatable minerals in areas with the highest potential for minerals development. The Minerals LUD is also intended to ensure that minerals are developed in an environmentally sensitive manner, and that other high-valued resources are considered when minerals development occurs. Designating the area wilderness could affect potential mining activities within the area, as well as within non-National Forest System inholdings.

The roadless area contains 57,219 acres of land identified as a mineral activity tract having a high potential for expanding mineral exploration or development of locatable minerals (Coldwell, 1990; USDA Forest Service, 1991). Of these identified acres, 45,329 acres are allocated to the Minerals LUD. In addition, this roadless area contains an estimated 64,472 acres of undiscovered locatable mineral resources that are considered to have low potential for development (Brew et al., 1990; USDA Forest Service, 1991).

(8) Transportation and Utilities: An electric transmission line corridor running the length of the area was assigned to the Transportation and Utility System LUD in the 1997 Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan.

An extension of the Veteran's Memorial Highway from Echo Cove to Cascade Point is under consideration. A Forest Service right-of-way has been granted. When constructed, this road will cross short segments of National Forest System lands and will influence the edge of the roadless area in the vicinity.

(9) Water Availability and Use: The public recreation cabins and Mendenhall Recreation Area create some demand for water in this area. There are no existing or planned hydroelectric or domestic water projects in the area.

(10) Areas of Scientific Interest: The glaciers and surrounding scenery are the most significant special features of the area. There are no existing or proposed Research Natural Areas within this roadless area. Mendenhall Glacier Recreation Area, which is partially within the area, has been identified as a Special Interest Area in the Forest Plan.

(11) Land Use Authorizations: Special use permits for this area are issued primarily for outfitter and guide activities. There are Special Use Permits for communication sites for AT&T on Mt. Bessy and Auck Mountain. The Forest Service also uses Auck Mountain as a communication site. The 1997 Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan allocated a site on Heintzleman Ridge for a future communication site for television, radio, or cellular telephone towers and buildings.

There is a Special Use Permit for an access road on National Forest System land issued to Glacier Gardens, a popular local attraction.

(12) Land Status: All lands within the roadless area are part of the National Forest System. Encumbered land within the roadless area is located near Tee Harbor.

IV. Wilderness Evaluation (Need for Wilderness)

(1) Public and Congressional Interest:

(a) Interest Expressed by Local Users and Residents: Most use of the area is associated with a variety of recreational activities, both motorized and non-motorized, including hunting, fishing, viewing scenery, and activities in support of tourism. There is local interest and concern regarding availability of firewood.

(b) Congressional Interest: In 1989, U.S. House of Representatives Bill HR 987 proposed to designate 23 areas as wilderness on the Tongass National Forest. This bill did not include the Juneau Urban Roadless Area. In 2001, HR 2908 identified part of the north portion of the area as a Proposed Wilderness Addition. The bill identified the remainder of the area as a proposed LUD II addition. The bill also proposed that Davies Creek, Cowee Creek, Eagle River, and Herbert River receive Wild and Scenic River designation. It also identified two short lengths of road corridor as restoration areas. These roads and corridors extend into but are not part of the roadless area.

(c) Public Input During Forest Plan Revision and Appeals: Many letters received about the Juneau area and the Juneau Urban Roadless Area opposed the application of the Minerals LUD to the area because mining would conflict with the area's scenic and recreation values. Several local conservation groups (including Alaskans for Juneau, Audubon Society, Sierra Club, Taku Conservation Society, Southeast Alaska Conservation Council) expressed similar concerns on this issue. Specific areas, such as the Eagle and Herbert Glacier trails, as well as the entire area, were mentioned for withdrawal from this LUD. Many commenters also opposed any timber harvest allocations (especially at Cowee Creek) citing recreation and hunting/subsistence conflicts. Other areas mentioned where recreation values should take precedence included Spaulding Meadow, Windfall Lake, and the ocean shoreline from Tea Harbor north. Several commenters, including the Goldbelt Corporation, were concerned that LUD designations in the area be compatible with possible development of their lands.

(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: The primary issue commented on the Helicopter Landing Tours on the Juneau Icefields EIS was the helicopter noise in Juneau. There were concerns regarding the effect of noise on Juneau residents, wildlife, and recreationists. The commenters were both for and against commercial recreation on the icefields and glaciers.

(f) Public Input Expressed During Supplemental EIS Process: The Landmark Trees Project noted that there is an example of streamside Landmark Forest on Cowee Creek, north of Juneau. They commented that the 1-acre stand contains 5 spruces between 180 and 200 ft. tall and most are greater than 150 ft and there were tracks of sow and cub brown bear. It is the finest forest they have found on the northern Tongass.

SEACC recommended that Roadless Areas 301, 302, 305, and 313, which are largely contiguous, should be treated as one roadless area and should be recommended for wilderness and LUD II protection, as described in Alternative 6. They indicated that the area surrounding the population center should be protected by LUD II; these areas are important for recreation, subsistence, and tourism.

The Alaska Rainforest Campaign (a coalition of national and Alaska conservation groups) identified Roadless Areas 301, 302, 305, and 313 as a contiguous complex of roadless areas that should be considered one roadless area and recommended it for permanent protection in a combination of wilderness and LUD II, as described in Alternative 6.

A Juneau Area Assemblyman recommended Cowee and Davies Creeks watersheds for designation as wilderness. He also recommended Benjamin Island for designation as wilderness. Benjamin Island is not included in any of the roadless areas but is close to Roadless Area 305.

Many individuals wanted the Cowee and Davies Creek drainages on the south side of Berners Bay to be protected from timber harvesting (the areas are partially open now). Some also identified Yankee Basin, Windfall Lake, Peterson Lake, Herbert River, and upper Montana Creek as being important fish and wildlife corridors worthy of protection. Some individuals wanted Cowee and Davies Creeks drainages to be protected as LUD II or wilderness.

(2) Nearby Roadless and Wilderness Areas and Uses: The Juneau Urban Roadless Area is part of a larger mainland roadless area that runs from the international border north of Skagway to Misty Fiords National Monument Wilderness and the international border to the south. The Skagway-Juneau Icefield Roadless Area borders the area to the east. The Chilkat-West Lynn Canal Roadless Area is located west across Lynn Canal from the area. The Endicott River Wilderness also located west across Lynn Canal is the closest wilderness area.

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

Community	Air Miles	Water Miles
Juneau (Pop. 30,711)	<5	15
Sitka (Pop. 8,835)	95	150
Hoonah (Pop. 860	30	60
Angoon (Pop. 572)	60	80

The nearest stop on the Alaska Marine Highway is the Auke Bay Ferry Terminal in Juneau.

(4) Relative Contribution to the National Wilderness Preservation System: The Juneau Urban Roadless Area is irregularly shaped. It is located on the mainland near Juneau and extends north from the Lemon Creek area to Point Bridget State Park and Echo Cove. Land owned by the Borough and City of Juneau borders the area to the south. The area is bordered to the east by the Skagway-Juneau Icefield Roadless Area. The area is generally characterized as being mountainous, forested, and, in places, deeply incised with steep-walled, glacially scoured

valleys that extend from sea level to the Juneau Icefield. Glaciers and icefalls are the most dramatic features and, combined with the surrounding ridges of over 3,000 to 4,000 feet, provide topographic relief of extraordinary beauty. Rivers in the area include Davies Creek, Cowee Creek, Eagle River, and Herbert River.

The area is mostly natural appearing and unmodified; however, it is influenced by the urban developments and activities associated with Juneau. The natural integrity and apparent naturalness of the area is rated very high. The opportunity for solitude is moderate and the opportunity for primitive recreation is high.

The area has very high scenic quality; approximately 44 percent of the landscape is considered distinctive for the character type from a scenery standpoint. Glaciers in this area include parts of Eagle, Herbert, and Mendenhall Glaciers. There are no other known unique geologic features. The Mendenhall Glacier Recreation Area is managed as a Special Interest Area under the Forest Plan to promote recreation and research. The area's proximity to Juneau and its heavy tourism traffic, along with its outstanding scenic and geologic resources, is a special value of the area. The area also has a rich history related to the mineral resources associated with the area.

The roadless area includes about 14,013 acres of high-volume, old-growth forest. Of these acres, 3,264 are mapped as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth.

The Juneau Urban Roadless Area lies partially within the Ice Fields, Lynn Canal, and Northern Coast Range Biogeographic Provinces. Approximately 55 percent of the roadless area is within the Ice Fields Province and makes up about 2 percent of that province. It is one of nine inventoried roadless areas found in the province that collectively make up about 67 percent of the province. Portions of the Tracy Arm-Fords Terror, Stikine-LeConte, and Misty Fiords National Monument Wilderness lie within the Ice Fields Province and make up about 33 percent of the province. Another 20 percent of the Juneau Urban Roadless Area lies within the Lynn Canal Province and makes up about 3 percent of the province. It is one of four inventoried roadless areas that collectively make up about 77 percent of the province. The Endicott River Wilderness makes up about 15 percent of the Lynn Canal Province, and the Berners Bay LUD II area makes up another 6 percent of the province. The last 25 percent of the Skagway-Juneau Roadless Area is located within the Northern Coast Range Province and makes up about 2 percent of the province. It is one of six inventoried roadless areas found in the province that collectively make up about 66 percent of the province. Portions of the Chuck River and Tracy Arm-Fords Terror Wildernesses are within the province and make up about 23 percent of the province.

The Juneau Urban Roadless Area lies within two ecological sections; it represents 4 percent of the Kootznoowoo Fjordlands Ecological Section and 1 percent of the Boundary Ranges Ecological Section. Both of these ecological sections are well represented by existing wilderness (78 and 33 percent, respectively), with an additional 11 and 61 percent, respectively, in other existing non-development LUDs and 1 percent each in LUD II.

Approximately half of this roadless area (55 percent) is within the Stephens Passage Glaciomarine Terraces Ecological Subsection. This portion of the roadless area represents 18 percent of the entire ecological subsection, which is well represented in existing wilderness (36 percent), with an additional 5 percent in LUD II and 31 percent in other non-development LUDs. The remainder of this roadless area (45 percent) is within the Boundary Ranges Icefields Ecological Subsection; this portion of the roadless area represents 1 percent of the entire ecological subsection. Approximately 32 percent of this ecological subsection is in existing wilderness, an additional 1 percent is in existing LUD II, and an additional 61 percent is protected by other existing non-development LUDs.

The Juneau Urban Roadless Area was rated 21 out of a possible 28 points under the Wilderness Attribute Rating System (WARS). As such, its WARS rating is ranked 47th from the highest (along with five other roadless areas) among the 109 Tongass inventoried roadless areas.

There is considerable local and national support for management of the area in an unroaded condition, and some national support for wilderness designation for at least a portion of this area. Designation would create a wilderness with very high scenic and geologic interest values that are sought out by the large numbers of visitors to Juneau. This very high use, coupled with the ongoing development and activities associated with the urban area of Juneau, would be in conflict with wilderness objectives. Overall, the factors identified here indicate that the relative contribution of this area to the National Wilderness Preservation System would be moderate.

V. Environmental Consequences

The Juneau Urban Roadless Area would be managed under the existing Forest Plan if Alternative 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 is implemented. Approximately 73 percent of the roadless area would be managed under non-development LUDs. Timber harvest and road development could occur in the remaining 27 percent. The land in the development LUDs provides an estimated 3,256 acres that are suitable for timber production (8 percent of the suitable land on the Juneau Ranger District). Approximately 200 of the suitable acres are classified as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. The roadless area contains 57,219 acres of land identified as a mineral activity tract having a high potential for expanding mineral exploration or development of locatable minerals. In addition, the roadless area contains an estimated 64,472 acres of undiscovered locatable mineral resources that are considered to have low potential for development. Recreation and special uses would continue, including the very high tourism-related activities. The values associated with natural settings could be affected by timber management activities in the northern portions of the area. The geologic and most scenic values would be protected under the Forest Plan.

Under Alternative 6, most of the roadless area, 74,445 acres, would be converted to Recommended LUD II and the northern portion would be converted to Recommended Wilderness LUD. No timber harvest would be allowed. The potential for other uses and development, including recreation, some special uses, and minerals, could be restricted in the Recommended Wilderness area. Mineral prospecting and development would be allowed up to the time that the area is actually designated as wilderness by Congress. The values associated with the natural settings of the roadless area, including the scenic and geologic values, would be provided long-term protection if designated LUD II or wilderness.

Under Alternative 7, a 20,355-acre portion of the roadless area currently allocated to Old-growth Habitat and Scenic Viewshed LUDs would be converted to Recommended Wilderness. No timber harvest would be allowed and the potential for other uses and development, including recreation, some special uses, and minerals, could be restricted within the Recommended Wilderness LUD. Lands suitable for timber production in the roadless area would be reduced to approximately 1,380 acres. Mineral prospecting and development would be allowed up to the time that the area is actually designated as wilderness by Congress. The values associated with the natural settings of the northern portion of the roadless area, including the scenic and geologic values, would be provided long-term protection if designated wilderness.

With Alternative 8, the entire roadless area would be converted to Recommended Wilderness. No timber harvest would be allowed and the potential for other uses and development, including recreation, some special uses, and minerals, could be restricted. Mineral prospecting and development would be allowed up to the time that the area is actually designated as wilderness by Congress. The values associated with the natural settings of the roadless area, including the scenic and geologic values, would be provided long-term protection if designated wilderness.

Land Use Designation Allocations and Suitable Timber Lands by Alternative for Roadless Area 305 (in acres)

Land Use Designation	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7	Alt 8
Recommended Wilderness						20,355	20,355	94,800
Wilderness								
Recommended Wilderness Nat. Mon.								
Wilderness National Monument								
Non-wilderness National Monument								
Research Natural Area								
Special Interest Area	6,722	6,722	6,722	6,722	6,722		6,722	
Remote Recreation	9,167	9,167	9,167	9,167	9,167		9,166	
Enacted Municipal Watershed								
Old-growth Habitat	3,422	3,422	3,422	3,422	3,422		946	
Semi-remote Recreation	49,526	49,526	49,526	49,526	49,526		49,526	
Recommended LUD II						74,445		
LUD II								
Wild, Scenic, Recreational River								
Experimental Forest								
Scenic Viewshed	25,962	25,962	25,962	25,962	25,962		8,084	
Modified Landscape								
Timber Production								
TOTAL	**94,800**	**94,800**	**94,800**	**94,800**	**94,800**	**94,800**	**94,800**	**94,800**
Suitable Timber Lands	3,256	3,256	3,256	3,256	3,256	0	1,380	0