

Appendix C

INDIVIDUAL ROADLESS AREA DESCRIPTION

ROADLESS AREA NAME: Gravina (522)

ACRES (NFS): 38,978

BIOGEOGRAPHIC PROVINCE: Revilla Island/Cleveland Peninsula

ECOLOGICAL SECTION: Inside Passage Fjordlands

2003 WILDERNESS ATTRIBUTE RATING: 21

I. Overview and Description

(1) **Location and Access:** This roadless area is located on the south and west side of Gravina Island. Non-National Forest System lands border the area to the north and part of the east. Clarence Strait and Nichols Passage border the island to the west and east, respectively. Ketchikan, with regularly scheduled air flights and on the Alaska Marine Highway, is located approximately 10 miles east of the area. Metlakatla, also on the Alaska Marine Highway, is located approximately 5 miles southeast across Nichols Passage.

The area may be accessed from the adjacent non-National Forest System lands and via boat, floatplane, and airport ferry. Many people access the interior of the island by riding the airport ferry and then hiking on primitive trails from the airport. There are no places suitable for landing wheeled airplanes within the roadless area.

(2) **History:** This roadless area includes all of the National Forest System lands on Gravina Island except that portion which contains a road that extends from Vallenar Bay. Gravina Island was used by prehistoric and historic Alaska Native cultures and has also been an integral part of the development of Ketchikan and southern Southeast Alaska. The north end of Gravina Island was reserved for the development of the city of Ketchikan. Since the early days of the developing fishing, mining, and timber industries, almost all of the northern, eastern, and some of the southern and western coastlines of the island have been influenced by settlers building home and cabin sites, storage shelters, and anchorage facilities. Handlogging has occurred around the island's shoreline. To this day, remnants of these sites can be found. There are at least 33 known heritage sites within this area. Nine are prehistoric sites, 22 are historic sites, and 2 are paleontological sites. Prehistoric sites include fish weirs, fish traps, and rock shelters. Historic sites include homesites, fish camps, mining activity, and aircraft navigational beacons (USDA Forest Service, 2001). Goldschmidt and Haas (1946) identified commercial fish traps along the shorelines of this area and a former camp on the west shore of Bostwick Inlet. They also identified berrying, hunting/trapping, and salmon fishing in the vicinity of this inlet.

(3) **Geography and Topography:** The area is characterized by low elevation and subdued topography, a rugged backbone ridge, and muskeg flats. The maximum elevation is 2,700 feet. There are 78 miles of shoreline on saltwater, approximately 526 acres of alpine, approximately 126 acres of rock, and 67 acres of freshwater lake. The area contains 223 islands and islets totaling 312 acres.

(4) **Ecosystem:**

(a) **Classification:** Biogeographic Province. This roadless area is in Revilla Island/Cleveland Peninsula Biogeographic Province. The climate in this area is variable with warm and wet conditions predominating on land nearest the outer coast and much colder conditions near the mainland. Revilla, Gravina, and Annette Islands are influenced by human activities and populations.

Ecological Section/Subsection. The Gravina Roadless Area is contained entirely within the Inside Passage Fjordlands Ecological Section (M247E). This area is represented by one ecological subsection. (see table below). The Clarence Strait Volcanics Ecological Subsection consists of volcanic peaks bordering the

eastern side of Clarence Strait in a southwesterly or northeasterly direction. Glaciers have smoothed the topography and left a legacy of broad valleys, steep slopes, alpine lakes, hanging valleys, and coastal lowlands. Plant cover is dependent on soil permeability and much of the Clarence Strait Volcanics Ecological Subsection is not forested. Productive hemlock or hemlock-spruce forests are limited to well-drained slopes (Nowacki et al., 2001).

Ecological Section	Ecological Subsection	Percent of Roadless Area
Inside Passage Fjordlands	Clarence Strait Volcanics	100%

(b) Soils: Soils in this area are highly organic with low clay content and are generally formed over bedrock. Soil depths range to 40 inches.

(c) Vegetation: This area is typical Southeast Alaska coastal temperate rain forest. The forest is primarily western hemlock and Sitka spruce with a moderate cedar component. Approximately 701 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 37,311 acres mapped as forestland, of which 18,847 acres (50 percent) are mapped as productive old-growth forest. Of the productive old growth, 7,152 acres (38 percent) are mapped as high-volume old-growth forest. The productive old growth includes about 1,919 acres of high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. The area also includes 354 acres of second growth where timber harvest has occurred in the past.

(d) Fish Resources: The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) rated fish resources as part of its Forest Habitat Integrity Program (1983). These ratings describe the value of VCUs for sport fish, commercial fish, and estuaries. One VCU was rated highly for estuary value. The Tongass Fish and Wildlife Resource Assessment (ADF&G, 1998) did not list any VCUs in this area as primary salmon or sportfish producers.

The two largest watersheds with the greatest salmon production are Bostwick and Vallenar Creeks. Pink, chum, and coho salmon, and steelhead trout are found in the streams in this area.

(e) Wildlife Resources: This area has populations of Sitka black-tailed deer, some black bear and wolves, and populations of marten, mink, and beaver. Bald eagles are also found within the area. Brown bear, moose, and mountain goats do not inhabit Gravina Island (MacDonald and Cook, 1999).

(5) Management Direction and Current Uses: This roadless area was allocated to five different Land Use Designations (LUDs) in the 1997 Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan. These LUDs are Timber Production, Scenic Viewshed, Minerals, Old-growth Habitat, and Semi-remote Recreation. The Minerals LUD is a secondary LUD that overlays the other land use designations.

LUD	Acres
Timber Production	17,262
Scenic Viewshed	7,329
Minerals*	4,329
Old-growth Habitat	14,210
Semi-remote Recreation	177

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

Approximately 63 percent of the roadless area (not including the LUD overlay) was allocated to one of two developments LUDs (Timber Production, Scenic Viewshed). Approximately 44 percent of this area was allocated to the Timber Production LUD. The Scenic Viewshed LUD was assigned to approximately 19 percent of the

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roadless area. Approximately 11 percent of this roadless area was allocated to the Minerals LUD overlay. The south end of the area, in the vicinity of Dall Head and Nehenta Bay, was allocated to the Minerals LUD overlay.

Approximately 37 percent of the roadless area was allocated to a non-development LUD (Old-growth Habitat and Semi-remote Recreation). Approximately 37 percent of the roadless area was allocated to the Old-growth Habitat LUD. Lands allocated to this LUD are located mostly west of Dall Ridge. Smaller islands associated with the roadless area are allocated to the Semi-remote Recreation LUD, accounting for less than 1 percent of the roadless area.

An electronics site is located on High Mountain. There is good opportunity for primitive recreation in the interior of the island and along the southwest coast. The latter area includes good saltwater fishing and the Phocena Bay public recreation cabin. There was no outfitter/guide use reported in this area in 2000. The Tongass Fish and Wildlife Resource Assessment (ADF&G, 1998) indicated that the five VCU's wholly or partially located within this area are subsistence use areas.

The Gravina Island Timber Sale DEIS (USDA Forest Service, 2001) identified two preferred alternatives that would make between 31 and 37 million board feet (MMBF) of timber available in multiple sales. These sales would occur entirely within the Gravina Roadless Area. Four potential timber sales in this area are identified in the Forest Service's 10-Year Action Plan. Three of these sales are proposed as part of the Gravina Island Timber Sale DEIS. These sales are the Fling Timber Sale, estimated to consist of 6 MMBF and scheduled for 2003, the Dutchman Timber Sale, estimated to consist of 18 MMBF and scheduled for 2004, the Abney Timber Sale, estimated to consist of 6 MMBF and scheduled for 2005. The Smooth Mountain Sale, estimated to consist of 19 MMBF, is scheduled for 2011. The Gravina Island Timber Sale DEIS also proposes to make several modifications to small Old-growth Habitat Reserves, in line with the recommendations of interagency biologists. This would make some adjustments to the LUDs for the area.

(6) Appearance (Apparent Naturalness): Almost all of this area has remained unaltered by human activity. Exceptions include areas that have had timber harvesting and evidence of human habitation along some of the coastal areas, including Vallenar Bay. Beach logging has occurred in the general vicinity of Phocena Cove, Nelson Cove, and in a relatively small area on the east shore of Bostwick Inlet. Small areas have also been logged in the north portion of the area and inland, west of Bostwick Inlet. Most of these areas were harvested decades ago and are natural appearing to the average observer. Otherwise, the area appears to be in a natural state and generally unmodified by humans. Two exceptions are the public recreation cabin and the radio tower on High Mountain. However, these features have little effect on the area's overall natural setting. The area generally displays natural characteristics when viewed from major and minor water travel routes and when inside the area.

(7) Surroundings (External Influences): Gravina Island is heavily influenced by the urban growth in the greater Ketchikan area. The Ketchikan International airport is on the northern end of the island. Flight patterns cause noise and visual influence within the roadless area. State selections extend into the roadless area causing an irregular boundary. State lands are dedicated for community development, timber harvest, and expansion. Therefore, their impact upon the roadless area will likely increase over time. A forest road and associated timber harvest units extend along Vallenar Creek into the north part of the area. Clarence Strait borders the area to the west. Nichols Passage and Bostwick Inlet partially border the area to the east. The majority of the area's south border is also formed by saltwater. There is near constant sports and commercial fishing along the coast causing a constant drone of boat engines in the area, which subsides somewhat during the winter months. Jets and floatplanes routinely pass overhead.

(8) Attractions and Features of Special Interest: The natural features of the area, the scenery, the saltwater bays and inlets, and the opportunity to see wildlife and to study the processes that formed this country may all be attractions. The area contains eight inventoried recreation places, which cover 25,871 acres (66 percent) of the roadless area.

(9) Differences between the 1989 and 2003 Roadless Area Boundary: The boundaries of this roadless area did not significantly change between 1989 and 2003. One exception is the beach-logged areas (i.e., areas that were logged but not roaded) that were excluded from the 1990 area. These areas are included as part of the 2003 area.

II. Capability for Management as Wilderness

(1) Natural Integrity and Apparent Naturalness: The area appears unmodified except for the areas that have been logged and the trace remains of human activity that occurred during the early 1900s. The urban growth, diverse land ownership, and the airport disrupt the natural integrity of this area. Overall, the area has very high natural integrity and apparent naturalness.

(2) Opportunity for Solitude and Serenity, Self-reliance, Adventure, Challenging Experiences, and Primitive Recreation: The opportunity for solitude within the area is moderate and the opportunity for primitive recreation is high. Along the coast, there is near constant sports and commercial fishing causing a constant drone of boat engines. Within the area, people can see jets and floatplanes overhead and hear their engines, although a person entering the interior of this roadless area is not likely to meet other humans. There was no outfitter/guide use reported in this area in 2000.

The opportunity for primitive recreation is best in the interior of the island and along the southwest coast. The latter area possesses good saltwater fishing and a public recreation cabin. Some of the primitive recreation opportunities in this area may be affected in the future by development on the extensive State and private lands in the area. The eastern side of the island near Ketchikan is heavily influenced by jet and other airline and boat traffic.

The area primarily provides 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
Primitive (P)	24,871	64%
Semi-Primitive Motorized (SPM)	12,829	33%
Roaded Motorized (RM)	286	1%
Rural (R)	941	2%

The area contains eight inventoried recreation places, which cover 25,871 acres (66 percent) of the roadless area.

ROS Class	# of Rec. Places	Total Acres
P	3	15,157
SPM	5	10,555
RM	0	0
R	1	160

A public recreation cabin is available at the Dall Bay State Marine Park, just south of the roadless area.

(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 (RARE II) process. 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 1989 rating for the Gravina Roadless Area was 22 out of 28 possible points. The 1989 rating was re-evaluated for this updated version of the AMS. Based on this re-evaluation, the area was given a rating of 21. The difference is more reflective of ongoing activities adjacent to the area and those influences on solitude and primitive recreation opportunities.

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(4) Ecologic and Geologic Values: The Gravina Roadless Area is located on Gravina Island. Non-National Forest System lands border the area to the north and part of the east. The area is not part of a larger roadless area.

(a) Fish Resources: The Tongass Fish and Wildlife Resource Assessment (ADF&G, 1998) did not list any VCUs in this area as primary salmon or sportfish producers.

The two largest watersheds with the greatest salmon production in the area are Bostwick and Vallendar Creeks. Pink, chum, and coho salmon, and steelhead trout are found in the streams in this area. Information from ADF&G indicates that Bostwick Creek had an average annual peak escapement of 15,280 pink salmon for the years 1992 to 2001.

(b) Wildlife Resources: This area has populations of Sitka black-tailed deer, some black bear and wolves, and populations of marten, mink, and beaver. Brown bear, moose, and mountain goats do not inhabit Gravina Island (MacDonald and Cook, 1999). According to the Gravina Island Timber Sale DEIS (USDA Forest Service, 2001), 17 bald eagle nests have been identified in this area on National Forest System land. Queen Charlotte goshawks have been identified in the vicinity of Phocena Bay, trumpeter swans were observed at Bostwick Lake and Inlet, and Ospreys are believed to migrate through the area.

(c) Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species: The only federally listed threatened and 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. Four Forest Service Region 10 Sensitive Species are suspected or known to occur within the area: the trumpeter swan, osprey, Peale's peregrine falcon, and the Queen Charlotte goshawk. Trumpeter swans nest in the lowlands on small lakes and along major rivers and winter in ice-free areas throughout the Tongass. Trumpeter swans have been observed at Bostwick Lake and Inlet. Present from April through September, ospreys are rare in Southeast Alaska where they reach the northern extent of their nesting range. Feeding almost exclusively on fish, ospreys typically nest in large snags near lakes or the coast where fish are abundant. 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. The species has been identified in the vicinity of Phocena Bay. In addition, eight sensitive plant species are known or suspected to occur in the Ketchikan Ranger District. Two sensitive plants, Calder lovage and loose-flowered bluegrass, have been identified in this roadless area (USDA Forest Service, 2001).

(d) Karst, Cave, and Other Geologic Resources: There is a band of mostly high vulnerability karst in this roadless area, around the southern portion of Punch Hill. The karst resources in this area encompass 688 acres (2 percent) of the roadless area. About one-third of the karst is mapped as high vulnerability karst. There are no glaciers or unique geologic features.

(5) Scientific and Educational Values: There are no known special features or Research Natural Areas located in this area. Ketchikan, the closest community, is located approximately 3 miles east of the area. Metlakatla is located approximately 6 miles southeast across Nichols Passage. However, the Gravina Roadless Area is not readily accessible to school-age children.

(6) Scenic Values: This area is part of the Coastal Hills visual character type, which is characterized by moderately steep landforms, predominantly rounded summits, elevations up to 2,700 feet, and flat floored, U-shaped valleys. The Gravina Roadless Area is, for the most part, very representative of this character type. Overall, with the exception of the areas that have been logged and the evidence of human habitation along some of the coastal areas, the area appears to be in a natural state and generally unmodified by humans. Two other exceptions are the Phocena Cove public recreation cabin and the radio tower on High Mountain. However, these features have little effect on the area's overall natural setting.

The area generally displays natural characteristics when viewed from major and minor water travel routes and when inside the area. Visual Priority Routes and Use Areas identified by the Forest Plan that are within or adjacent to the area, include: Clarence Strait (Alaska Marine Highway and Tour Ship Route); Vallendar Bay, Bostwick Inlet, Nichols Pass, Dall Bay, Blank Inlet, and Tongass Narrows (Saltwater Use Areas); Phocena Cove cabin (Public

Recreation Cabin); Tongass Highway (Public Use Road); Dall Bay (State Marine Park); and Ketchikan, Saxman, and Metlakatla (Communities).

Approximately 96 percent of the area was inventoried as Variety Class B (possessing characteristics that are common in the character type). The more distinctive and rugged landforms are found in the Dall Head area of Gravina Island. Approximately 4 percent of the area was not inventoried for Variety Class type.

Approximately 85 percent of this area was inventoried as Type I Existing Visual Condition where the landscape has remained unaltered by human activity. Another 4 percent was classified as EVC II. Approximately 7 percent was classified as EVC III, where the average person notices changes in the landscape, but they do not attract significant attention. Approximately 4 percent was not inventoried for EVC.

(7) Social, Cultural, and Historical Values: This roadless area includes all of the National Forest System lands on Gravina Island except that portion which contains a road that extends from Vallenar Bay. Gravina Island was used by prehistoric and historic Alaska Native cultures and has also been an integral part of the development of Ketchikan and southern Southeast Alaska. The north end of Gravina Island was reserved for the development of the city of Ketchikan. Since the early days of the developing fishing, mining and timber industry, almost all of the northern, eastern, southern and some of the western coastlines of the island have been influenced by settlers building home and cabin sites, storage shelters, and anchorage facilities. Handlogging occurred around the island's shoreline. To this day, remnants of these sites can be found. There are at least 33 known heritage sites within this area. Nine are prehistoric sites, 22 are historic sites, and 2 are paleontological sites. Prehistoric sites include fish weirs, fish traps, and rock shelters. Historic sites include homesites, fish camps, mining activity, and aircraft navigational beacons (USDA Forest Service, 2001). Goldschmidt and Haas (1946) identified commercial fish traps along the shorelines of this area and a former camp on the west shore of Bostwick Inlet. They also identified berrying, hunting/trapping, and salmon fishing in the vicinity of this inlet.

There is good opportunity for primitive recreation in the interior of the island and along the southwest coast. The latter area includes good saltwater fishing and the Phocena Cove public recreation cabin. There was no outfitter/guide use reported in this area in 2000. The Tongass Fish and Wildlife Resource Assessment indicated that the five VCUs wholly or partially located within this area are subsistence use areas with a high sensitivity to disturbance. However, none of the VCUs in this area were included among the VCUs with the highest, second or third most important community use values (ADF&G, 1998).

(8) Manageability as Wilderness and Boundary Conditions/Changes: The irregular State land boundaries would make it difficult to manage this area in a wilderness or roadless condition. These boundaries do not take advantage of natural topographic features and, in most cases, are on relatively flat ground. These ownership property boundaries are surveyed and marked on the ground. Access to other ownerships would be difficult to control.

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

(1) Recreation, Including Tourism Potential: There is potential for trail development connecting the east side of Gravina Island along Tongass Narrows to Bostwick Lake and Inlet. The State of Alaska would be involved in this development.

(2) Subsistence Uses: The existing patterns of subsistence activities in the area would not be affected by wilderness designation. However, subsistence could be affected by the Gravina Timber Timber Sale and associated road network.

(3) Fish Resources: No fish habitat enhancement projects are planned for this roadless area.

(4) Wildlife Resources: No wildlife enhancement projects are planned for this roadless area.

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(5) **Timber Resources:** There are 18,847 acres mapped as productive old growth and 354 acres mapped as second growth in the roadless area. Of these acres, 16,034 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), 4,468 acres (11 percent) of this roadless area are estimated to be suitable for timber production. Approximately 1,467 of the suitable acres are mapped as high-volume old growth; of these acres, 360 are mapped as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth.

The Gravina Island Timber Sale DEIS (USDA Forest Service, 2001) identified two preferred alternatives that would make between 31 and 37 million board feet (MMBF) of timber available in multiple sales. These sales would occur entirely within the Gravina Roadless Area. Four potential timber sales in this area are identified in the Forest Service's 10-Year Action Plan. Three of these sales are proposed as part of the Gravina Island Timber Sale DEIS. These sales are the Fling Timber Sale, estimated to consist of 6 MMBF and scheduled for 2003, the Dutchman Timber Sale, estimated to consist of 18 MMBF and scheduled for 2004, the Abney Timber Sale, estimated to consist of 6 MMBF and scheduled for 2005. The Smooth Mountain Sale, estimated to consist of 19 MMBF, is scheduled for 2011.

(6) **Fire, Insects, and Disease:** There is evidence of fire within the area, which occurred in the early part of the 1900s. This fire occurrence took place east of Phocena Bay. Endemic tree diseases common to Southeast Alaska are present. There are no known epidemic disease occurrences.

(7) **Minerals:** The southern end of Gravina Island has a history of mineral exploration and gold mining. Prospecting is presently occurring. This area was allocated to the Minerals LUD in the 1997 Tongass Land Management Plan Revision. There is potential for future mine development. The USGS (2001) indicates that mineral resources in the area include copper, silver, gold, and zinc.

This area contains 4,477 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). A total of 4,329 of these acres are allocated to the Minerals LUD. 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. It contains standards and guidelines to ensure that minerals are developed in an environmentally sensitive manner, and that other high-valued resources are considered when mineral developments occur. In addition, this area contains an estimated 38,978 acres of undiscovered locatable mineral resources (Brew et al., 1990; USDA Forest Service, 1991), all of which are considered to have low potential for development.

(8) **Transportation and Utilities:** There are no transportation or utility projects proposed for this area.

(9) **Water Availability and Use:** The Phocena Bay public recreation cabin is the only facility in this area where water is used for drinking. There are no existing or planned hydroelectric or domestic water projects within the roadless area.

(10) **Areas of Scientific Interest:** There are no areas of particular scientific interest located in this area.

(11) **Land Use Authorizations:** Several permitted electronics sites are located on High Mountain.

(12) **Land Status:** All land within the roadless area is part of the National Forest System. Encumbered land within the roadless area is located around Bostwick Inlet.

IV. Wilderness Evaluation (Need for Wilderness)

(1) **Public and Congressional Interest:**

(a) **Interest Expressed by Local Users and Residents:** The area receives significant local use for general hunting, subsistence and some recreation activity.

(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 Gravina Roadless Area. In 2001, HR 2908 identified the area as a proposed LUD II addition.

(c) Public Input During Forest Plan Revision and Appeals: This area was specifically addressed in public input received during the Forest Plan revision. A number of commenters felt that better road systems on Gravina and Revilla Islands would benefit Ketchikan residents by creating more recreation opportunities. One timber company requested that small scale logging be allowed on Gravina Island.

(d) Public Input During Roadless Area Conservation Rule and Road Management Policy Review: Gravina Island was one of the few areas in Southeast Alaska that was specifically referenced in public input during the Roadless Area Conservation Rule and Road Management Policy Review. Local Native Councils have requested that Gravina Island remain a roadless area because it has been used historically, and is still used, by Alaska Native people from the Ketchikan, Metlakatla and Saxman areas for subsistence fishing, gathering, and hunting. The Tribal Councils stated that all of the proposed or potential development activities would jeopardize the subsistence areas on Gravina, especially Bostwick Inlet.

(e) Public Input Expressed for Project-level EISs and Other Input: Considerable public input was received in response to the Gravina Island Timber Sale DEIS (USDA Forest Service, 2001). This public input, which is presently being reviewed, included comments that opposed the sale and others that supported it. Commenters opposing the sale generally cited the effects that logging Gravina Island and Bostwick Inlet in particular would have on subsistence use of the area. The potential effects of logging on the visual resources of the area, as viewed from Ketchikan, recreation, and fish and wildlife habitat were also identified as concerns.

(f) Public Input Expressed During Supplemental EIS Process: The Alaska Department of Fish and Game rated the Gravina roadless area as the third highest priority for protection in the Ketchikan Area (outside of POW Island). This rating is based on the VCUs with the highest value fish and wildlife resources needing additional protection. VCUs are prioritized for their very high productivity, essential role in connectivity, and/or very high value as community use areas.

SEACC recommended that the Gravina Island roadless area be designated as LUD II. The Alaska Rainforest Campaign (a coalition of national and Alaska conservation groups) recommended the Gravina Island roadless area for permanent protection as LUD II. The Tongass Conservation Society recommended the Gravina Island roadless area for permanent protection as LUD II. Audubon Alaska recommended that Gravina should be protected from logging and road building.

Ketchikan Indian Community passed a tribal resolution endorsing "...the congressionally designated roadless area on Gravina Island for wilderness." At the Ketchikan hearing, the Metlakatla Indian Community stated "...don't log Gravina." And, "Small islands can't take logging."

Some members of the Southeast Alaska Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Council identified the need for further protection of this area because of its importance for subsistence.

Many other commenters also recommended Gravina Island for protection, especially Bostwick Inlet. Some individuals recommended this area for permanent protection as wilderness.

(2) Nearby Roadless and Wilderness Areas and Uses: The Misty Fiords National Monument Wilderness is located approximately 19 miles east of the Gravina Roadless Area. The South Prince of Wales Wilderness is located approximately 24 miles to the west.

The North Revilla (#526) Roadless Area is located approximately 4 miles north of the area. The Revilla Roadless Area (#524) is located approximately 5 miles to the east. The McKenzie Roadless Area (#519) is located approximately 6 miles west across Clarence Strait. Other relatively close roadless areas include the Duke (#521), Behm Islands (#525), and Cleveland (#528) Roadless Areas.

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

Community	Air Miles	Water Miles
Juneau (Pop. 30,711)	225	230
Ketchikan (Pop. 14,070)	10	10
Wrangell (Pop. 2,308)	80	95
Petersburg (Pop. 3,324)	110	110

(4) Relative Contribution to the National Wilderness Preservation System: The Gravina Roadless Area is located on the south and west side of Gravina Island. Non-National Forest System lands border the area to the north and part of the east. Clarence Strait and Nichols Passage border the island to the west and east, respectively. The roadless area is characterized by low elevation and subdued topography, a rugged backbone ridge, and muskeg flats. The maximum elevation is 2,700 feet.

Most of the area is natural appearing. It has very high natural integrity and apparent naturalness. The opportunity for solitude is moderate and the opportunity for primitive recreation is high.

None of the landscape in this area is considered distinctive from a scenery standpoint. There is a small area of karst in the roadless area. The roadless area has cultural and historic values. There are no other known special features in this area.

The roadless area includes about 7,152 acres of high-volume, old-growth forest. Of these acres, approximately 1,919 are mapped as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth.

The Gravina Roadless Area is classified as being in the Revilla Island/Cleveland Peninsula Biogeographic Province and makes up about 3 percent of the province. It is one of 12 inventoried roadless areas found within the province which make up about 60 percent of the province. Part of the Misty Fjords National Monument Wilderness is located in this province and makes up about 18 percent of the province. The province also includes two Congressionally designated LUD II areas (Naha and Anan), which make up about 5 percent of the province.

The Gravina Roadless Area lies completely within the Inside Passage Fjordlands Ecological Section and represents 1 percent of the ecological section. Approximately 20 percent of the Inside Passage Fjordlands Ecological Section is in existing wilderness, 2 percent is in existing LUD II and 30 percent is protected by other existing non-development LUDs.

All (100 percent) of the roadless area is in the Clarence Strait Volcanics Ecological Subsection. The roadless area represents 15 percent of the entire ecological subsection, 15 percent of which is in existing wilderness and is well represented by other existing non-development LUDs (34 percent).

The Gravina 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 5 other roadless areas) among the 109 Tongass inventoried roadless areas.

There is some local and national support for managing this area in an unroaded condition, and there is little support for designation of the area as wilderness. Designation would create a wilderness with relatively high cultural and historic values but with no other significant features. It would be next to Ketchikan and extensive State and private lands that are likely to be developed for urban related purposes in the near future. Overall, the factors identified here indicate that the relative contribution of this roadless area to the National Wilderness Preservation System would be low to moderate.

V. Environmental Consequences

The Gravina Roadless Area would be managed under the existing Forest Plan if Alternative 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 7 is implemented. Approximately 37 percent of the roadless area would be managed under non-development LUDs. Timber harvest and road development could occur within the remaining 63 percent of the roadless area. The land in the development LUDs includes an estimated 4,468 acres that are suitable for timber production (7 percent of the suitable acres on the Ketchikan/Misty Fiords Ranger District). Approximately 360 of the suitable acres are classified as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. The southern end of Gravina Island has a history of mineral exploration and gold mining. Prospecting is presently occurring and there is potential for future mine development. This area contains 4,477 acres of land identified as a mineral activity tract having a high potential for experiencing mineral exploration and development of locatable minerals. In addition, this area contains an estimated 38,978 acres of undiscovered locatable mineral resources that are considered to have low potential for development. The recreation, minerals, and special use programs would continue. Timber harvest planning in the area would continue. The values associated with the natural settings of the roadless area could be affected by development activities allowed under the Forest Plan. The cultural, historic, and karst values are protected under the Forest Plan.

Under Alternative 6, the entire area would be converted to Recommended LUD II. The ongoing recreation, special uses, and minerals programs could continue similar to current conditions. No timber harvest would be allowed. The values associated with the natural settings of the roadless area, including the cultural, historic, and karst values, would be provided long-term protection if designated LUD II.

Under Alternative 8, the entire roadless area would be converted to Recommended Wilderness LUD. No timber harvest would be allowed. The ongoing recreational use, special uses, and mineral management could be restricted. Mineral prospecting 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 cultural, historic, and karst values, would be provided long-term protection if designated wilderness.

Land Use Designation Allocations and Suitable Timber Lands by Alternative for Roadless Area 522 (in acres)								
Land Use Designation	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7	Alt 8
Recommended Wilderness								38,978
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	14,210	14,210	14,210	14,210	14,210		14,210	
Semi-remote Recreation	177	177	177	177	177		177	
Recommended LUD II						38,978		
LUD II								
Wild, Scenic, Recreational River								
Experimental Forest								
Scenic Viewshed	7,329	7,329	7,329	7,329	7,329		7,329	
Modified Landscape								
Timber production	17,262	17,262	17,262	17,262	17,262		17,262	
TOTAL	38,978	38,978	38,978	38,978	38,978	38,978	38,978	38,978
Suitable Timber Lands	4,468	4,468	4,468	4,468	4,468	0	4,468	0