

# Appendix C

## INDIVIDUAL ROADLESS AREA DESCRIPTION

**ROADLESS AREA NAME:** North Revilla (526)

**ACRES (NFS):** 225,444

**BIOGEOGRAPHIC PROVINCE:** Revilla Island/Cleveland Peninsula

**ECOLOGICAL SECTION:** Inside Passage Fjordlands and Dixon Entrance Lowlands

**2003 WILDERNESS ATTRIBUTE RATING:** 20 (18, 19, 21, 22, 23)

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

(1) **Location and Access:** This area, is located on the west coast of Revillagigedo (Revilla) Island, is bordered to the east by Misty Fiords National Monument Wilderness. Behm Canal borders the area to the north. The area is generally bordered to the west by saltwater and areas of timber harvest and associated roads. The west shoreline of the area has been developed from Naha Bay north to Gedney Pass, with roads and harvest units extending along drainages into the North Revilla Roadless Area. The southwest part of the area is bordered to the west by the North Tongass Highway. Road building and timber harvest has also occurred on both sides of Carroll Inlet, which extends into the area. Non-National Forest System lands, forest roads, and timber harvest units border the area to the south. Ketchikan with regularly scheduled air flights and on the Alaska Marine Highway, is located approximately 5 miles south of the southern lobe of the area.

Access to the area is via saltwater, floatplane, or by foot. The North Tongass Highway and a number of forest roads provide access to the edge of the area. There are also a number of trails providing access to the area. These include the Naha River, Wolf Lake, and Margaret Creek Trails, and the trail to Orchard Lake. There are no places suitable for landing wheeled airplanes inside the roadless area.

(2) **History:** This area has a rich history. Prehistoric and historic Alaska Native cultures used this roadless area. Their activities mostly centered in the Naha Bay area and probably extended into the interior in the Naha drainage. The Naha River has been an important subsistence use area through recent history. A number of prehistoric and historic sites have been identified through archeological surveys, oral histories, and other historical records.

The commercial fishing industry established itself at Loring, which is located on Naha Bay. This site has been continually occupied since the early 1900s. The Naha drainage was open to homesteading and the Orton Ranch owes its origin to this. A fish hatchery was constructed at Heckman Lake in the early 1900s.

The city of Ketchikan is located approximately 5 miles south of the southern lobe of this roadless area; however, the rural part of Ketchikan north of town basically defines the boundary all the way to Naha Bay and Loring. Consequently, the southern part of the Revilla Roadless Area has been influenced in the past, and continues to be influenced, by human activity. The Ward Creek drainage was developed by the combination of early 1900s mining, Civilian Conservation Corps public works projects during the 1930's, and hydropower related facility development. In recent times, the State and Native Corporations have received extensive land selections in the headwaters of Ward Creek, along George and Carroll Inlets, and along the south boundary of this roadless area. Much of this land has been developed for timber production. Areas developed for timber management in the northern part of the roadless area define much of the boundary in those areas.

(3) **Geography and Topography:** The area is characterized by rugged terrain. Mountain slopes are steep, causing deeply incised drainages. The central portion of the North Revilla area is dominated by an extensive lake chain associated with the Naha River and its tributaries. Elevation ranges from sea level to over 4,000 feet. The

area includes 12,663 acres of alpine, 5,034 acres of rock, 55 miles of shoreline on saltwater, and four islands totaling 301 acres of islands. Freshwater lakes cover 3,528 acres.

**(4) Ecosystem:**

**(a) Classification:** Biogeographic Province. The area is located within the Revilla Island/Cleveland Peninsula Province. This province is characterized by a variable climate with wet conditions predominating on land nearest the outer coast, with much colder conditions near the mainland. Revilla Island has many exceptional estuaries and is influenced by human activities.

Ecological Section/Subsection. The North Revilla River Roadless Area is covered by two ecological sections: the Inside Passage Fjordlands (M247E) and Dixon Entrance Lowlands (M247J) Ecological Sections. These area are represented by four ecological subsection within the roadless area (see table below). Covering the western portion of the North Revilla Roadless Area, the Traitors Cove Metasediments Ecological Subsection is the dominant subsection within the roadless area. Steep slopes of glacially carved sedimentary rock give way to deeply incised valleys. Landslides are a common occurrence. Productive hemlock and Sitka spruce forests grow on well-drained soils on slopes. Forested wetlands are found in poorly drained soils along the valley floors. The eastern portion of the North Revilla Roadless Area is within the Behm Canal Complex Ecological Subsection. Glaciers left sheer, lake-filled valleys in the sedimentary and volcanic bedrock found in the south portion of the subsection, while the granitic geology to the north remains as high peaks (up to 4,000 feet elevation), rocks, and cliffs. Plant communities include large riparian wetlands and extensive alpine areas. The Bell Island Granitics Ecological Subsection, found in the northern portion of the North Revilla Roadless Area, is characterized by rounded hills and narrow, glacially scoured valleys. Within this subsection, mountain slope soils are usually well-drained, mineral soil, while lowlands, lake margins and wetlands are typically poorly drained soils (Nowacki et al., 2001).

Ecological Section	Ecological Subsection	Percent of Roadless Area
Inside Passage Fjordlands	Traitors Cove Metasediments	56%
	Behm Canal Complex	30%
	Bell Island Granitics	14%
Dixon Entrance Lowlands	Princess Bay Volcanics	<1%

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

**(c) Vegetation:** Vegetation is typical Southeast Alaska coastal temperate rain forest. The forest is primarily western hemlock and Sitka spruce with moderate components of cedar. Approximately 721 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 194,609 acres mapped as forestland, of which 102,033 acres or 52 percent are mapped as productive old-growth forest. Of the productive old growth, 64,804 acres or 64 percent are mapped as high-volume old-growth forest. The productive old growth includes about 10,835 acres of high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. The area also includes 2,235 acres of second growth where beach timber harvest, mostly beach logging, has occurred in the past.

**(d) Fish Resources:** The streams and rivers in this area provide habitat for coho, pink, chum, and sockeye salmon, cutthroat and steelhead trout, and Dolly Varden char. Major fish producing streams include the Naha River, Beaver Creek, Carroll Creek, and Wolf Creek. Traitors, Margaret and Mirror Creeks are also located in this area.

**(e) Wildlife Resources:** This area has populations of Sitka black-tailed deer, black bear, wolves, otter, marten, mink, loon, and common waterfowl. Marbled murrelets and northern goshawks have been

## Appendix C

found along major drainages. Trumpeter swans use some of the major saltwater inlets and freshwater lakes as resting areas during their migrations. Bald eagles and Canada geese nest in the area. There have been occasional reports of brown bear on Revilla Island, but a population has not established (USDA Forest Service, 1997). A population of mountain goats exists near Mount Reid.

**(5) Management Direction and Current Uses:** This roadless area was allocated to 13 Land Use Designations (LUDs) in the 1997 Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan. These 13 LUDs are Timber Production, Modified Landscape, Scenic Viewshed, Transportation and Utility System (TUS), Semi-remote Recreation, Old-growth Habitat, Remote Recreation, LUD II, LUDII/Wild and Scenic River, Recreational River, Wild River, Scenic River, and Special Interest Area. The TUS LUD is a secondary LUD that overlays the other land uses.

<b>LUD</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Timber Production	61,704
Modified Landscape	14,991
Scenic Viewshed	11,830
Transportation and Utility System (TUS)	NA
Semi-remote Recreation	38,285
Old-growth Habitat	31,364
Remote Recreation	24,664
LUD II (including LUDII/Wild and Scenic River)	31,316
Recreational River	5,361
Wild River	3,320
Scenic River	1,336
Special Interest Area	1,272

Approximately 39 percent of this area (not including the TUS LUD overlay) was allocated to a LUD that allows timber harvest or road construction (Timber Production, Modified Landscape, and Scenic Viewshed).

Approximately 27 percent of the roadless area was allocated to the Timber Production LUD. Approximately 7 percent of the roadless area was allocated to the Modified Landscape LUD. The Scenic Viewshed LUD was assigned to approximately 5 percent of the roadless area. This area also includes a potential road corridor and a potential power transmission corridor assigned to the Transportation and Utility System LUD. The Swan Lake-Lake Tye Intertie powerline has been authorized and permitted for construction, and traverses from Carroll Inlet north to Behm Canal. Clearing for construction began in 2002.

Most of this roadless area, approximately 61 percent, was allocated to non-development LUDs (Semi-remote Recreation, Old-growth Habitat, Remote Recreation, LUD II, LUDII/Wild River, Recreational River, Wild River, Scenic River, Special Interest Area). The Semi-remote Recreation LUD was assigned to approximately 17 percent of the roadless area, primarily in the Falls Creek, Orchard Creek, Naha Bay, and Behm Narrows areas. Approximately 14 percent of the roadless area was allocated to the Old-growth Habitat LUD, and is part of the Forest-wide wildlife conservation strategy. Approximately 11 percent of the area was allocated to the Remote Recreation LUD. Most of the Naha Creek watershed was assigned to the LUD II designation. LUD II accounts for approximately 14 percent of the roadless area; this includes areas designated as LUD II/Wild and Scenic River, where both LUDs apply. These joint areas are directly adjacent to Naha River and the associated lakes.

Approximately 2 percent of the roadless area was allocated to the Recreational River LUD, located around Orchard Creek and Lake. Approximately 1 percent was assigned to the Wild River LUD and less than 1 percent was assigned to the Scenic River LUD. Less than 1 percent of the roadless area was also assigned to the Special Interest Area LUD.

The North Revilla Roadless Area includes five recreation use cabins located on Jordan, Heckman, Patching, and Orchard Lakes, and two Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) era shelters on Wolf Lake, and Long Lake. Trails providing access to the area include the Naha River Trail (a designated National Recreation Trail), the Wolf Lake Trail, the Margaret Creek Trail, and the trail to Orchard Lake. One flight seeing tour outfitter/guide operated in the area for 75 service-days in 2000. There is also one wildlife observation area located at Margaret Lake near the

roadless area. This area has become very popular for bear viewing and the outfitter/guide use has increased substantially. There are two mooring buoys and one dock providing moorage at three of our trailheads.

Some subsistence use occurs in parts of the area. The Tongass Fish and Wildlife Resource Assessment (ADF&G, 1998) indicated that four of the VCUs located within this area are subsistence use areas with a high sensitivity to disturbance.

The Swan Lake Hydroelectric Project is located within the boundaries of this area. An existing electric transmission line that runs southwest from this facility borders the North Revilla Roadless Area. A planned power transmission corridor runs north through the area. The Forest Service has approved a Special Use Permit for Ketchikan Public Utilities to construct the Swan Lake-Lake Tyee Intertie Project, a 138-kV electric transmission line that would run through this corridor. Project clearing started in 2002. A potential road corridor also runs north through the area. Interest has been expressed in building a road that would provide access from Ketchikan to the northern portion of the island and beyond. This road was not included in the March 1999 Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan (Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, 1999).

Timber harvest activity occurred in the Gedney Pass, Neets Creek, and Traitors River areas during the 1970s, 1980's and 1990's. These harvested areas border the area to the northwest. The Upper Carroll Timber Sale FEIS (USDA Forest Service, 1996) resulted in the sale of 30MMBF in 1998. The sale area extends into the North Revilla Roadless Area. Approximately 83 percent of the volume of this sale is within a roadless area. Four potential timber sales in this area are identified in the Forest Service's 10-Year Action Plan that would be at least partially in this roadless area. These are the Rockfish, Klu, Lookout, and Stocked timbers sales and are scheduled for 2005, 2006, 2008, and 2009 for a total of about 26 MMBF.

**(6) Appearance (Apparent Naturalness):** Overall, the land within this roadless area appears to be in a natural condition. Exceptions include the Swan Lake Hydroelectric Facility, Orton Ranch, and the trails and public recreation cabins located in the area. These modifications have a low impact on the overall natural appearance of the area. However, the developed areas on adjacent lands, as well as the proximity of the Tongass Highway to part of the area, affect the perceived naturalness of parts of this area. This is especially the case in the numerous places where these developments extend along drainages into the area. Viewed from nearby travel routes, the area provides a natural backdrop to the developed areas in the foreground.

**(7) Surroundings (External Influences):** Misty Fiords National Monument Wilderness borders the area to the east. Behm Canal borders the area to the north. Saltwater and developed areas border the area to the west. In addition, the Tongass Highway borders the southwest portion of the area to the west. Non-National Forest System lands, primarily developed for timber management border the area to the south. A sizeable parcel of State land is in Neets Bay and a small Native Corporation parcel on the northwest side of Naha Bay is adjacent to the roadless area. The roadless area surrounds a few parcels of private property, including the Loring town site, the Orton Ranch, and the Heckman Lake fish hatchery. There is a private cabin built on the old Heckman Lake fish hatchery site.

External influences on the area include motorized boat traffic, activities in adjacent developed areas, motor vehicles traveling the Tongass Highway, and aircraft flying overhead. Frequent floatplane landings bring people to and from the five public recreation cabins in the area.

**(8) Attractions and Features of Special Interest:** The main attraction of this area is the excellent sportfishing, including steelhead fishing and beauty of the Naha River. The recreation use cabins are very popular. The close proximity of the Naha River system to Ketchikan makes this a very popular day-use area for people living in Ketchikan. The area contains 40 inventoried recreation places, which cover 89,443 acres, or 40 percent of the roadless area.

**(9) Differences between the 1989 and 2003 Roadless Area Boundary:** The boundaries of the North Revilla Roadless Area changed in four main ways between 1989 and 2003. First, the 2003 area includes land on the peninsula that borders Gedney Pass to the south. This area was the Neets Roadless Area (#527) in 1989. Second, land east of Carroll Inlet that was part of the Revilla Roadless Area (#524) in 1990 is included in the 2003 area. Third, the 2003 area includes land south and southwest of the Naha LUD II area. This land was also formerly part of the Revilla Roadless Area (#524). Developments, primarily in the George Inlet area have divided #524. Fourth,

## Appendix C

several smaller areas along 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:** Overall, the land within this roadless area has high natural integrity and moderate apparent naturalness. Developments include the Swan Lake Hydroelectric Facility and the trails and public recreation cabins located in the area. These modifications have a low impact on the overall natural appearance of the area. However, the developments that have occurred on adjacent lands, as well as the proximity of the Tongass Highway to part of the area, affect natural integrity in those areas and the apparent naturalness of parts of this area. This is especially the case in the numerous places where developed areas extend along drainages into the roadless area.

**(2) Opportunity for Solitude and Serenity, Self-reliance, Adventure, Challenging Experiences, and Primitive Recreation:** There is high opportunity for solitude and very high opportunities for primitive recreation within the area. A person visiting the Naha River drainage is, however, likely to encounter several other people. The youth groups staying at the Orton Ranch often recreate in this roadless area. Frequent floatplane landings bring people to and from the five public recreation cabins in the area. The other drainages within this roadless area offer more solitude with little chance of seeing other individuals.

The five recreation use cabins include those located on Jordan, Heckman, Patching, and Orchard Lakes, and two CCC era shelters on Wolf Lake, and Long Lake. Trails that provide access to the area include the Naha River Trail (a designated National Recreation Trail), the Wolf Lake Trail, the Margaret Creek Trail, and the trail to Orchard Lake. One flight seeing tour outfitter/guide operated in the area for 75 service days in 2000. There is also one wildlife observation area located at Margaret Lake. This area has become very popular for bear viewing and outfitter/guide use has increased substantially. There are two mooring buoys and one dock providing moorage at three of our trailheads.

There are good opportunities for primitive or near-primitive recreation experiences due to the many recreation and scenic attractions and the remoteness of these attractions. Most of the area offers primitive opportunities except portions of the Naha River area where periodic contacts with other parties or individuals may detract somewhat from this primitive experience.

The area provides primarily 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)	113,105	50%
Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized (SPNM)	70,725	31%
Semi-Primitive Motorized (SPM)	4,327	2%
Roaded Natural (RN)	6,159	3%
Roaded Modified (RM)	30,575	14%
Rural (R)	550	0%

The area contains 40 inventoried recreation places, which cover 89,443 acres, or 40 percent of the roadless area.

ROS Class	# of Rec. Places*	Total Acres
P	11	58,473
SPNM	8	13,966
SPM	5	2,945
RN	6	5,982
RM	15	7,920
R	2	157

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

The Misty-Fiords National Monument Wilderness Area, just east of the roadless area, also contains many recreation attractions.

**(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 North Revilla 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 20. The lower rating reflects ongoing developments. It should also be noted that this roadless area, which increased from approximately 164,810 acres in 1989 to 232,038 acres in 2003, now includes areas that were formerly parts of the Revilla (#524) and Neets (#527) Roadless Areas. Because of the large size of the roadless area and the degree of fragmentation created by ongoing developments on adjacent lands, five areas were rated separately. The area southwest of the Naha LUD II rated 19. The Naha LUD II rated 22. The Orchard Lake drainage rated 23. The peninsula located on the very north of the roadless area rated 21. The relatively small peninsula located near Gedney Pass rated 18.

**(4) Ecologic and Geologic Values:** The North Revilla roadless area is part of a larger unroaded land area. This larger area includes the Misty Fiords National Monument Wilderness, which borders the area to the east.

**(a) Fish Resources:** The Tongass Fish and Wildlife Resource Assessment listed four VCUs that start along the northern border close to Behm Canal and reach toward George Inlet (VCUs 733, 738, 742, and 748) as primary sportfish producers. There are five VCUs that also start along Behm Canal and Neets Bay and reach down to George Inlet (VCUs 739, 742, 744, 748, and 753) listed as primary salmon producers (ADF&G, 1998).

The streams and rivers in this area provide habitat for, coho, pink, chum, and sockeye salmon; cutthroat and steelhead trout; and Dolly Varden char. Major fish producing streams include the Naha River, Beaver Creek, Carroll Creek, and Wolf Creek (ADF&G, 2000). Traitors, Margaret, and Mirror Creeks are also located in the area.

The Naha River is well known for its excellent sport fisheries and recreation value, providing excellent trout and coho sport fishing. The river is a major producer of all commercial species of Pacific salmon except for chinook. The area is especially well known for its spring and fall steelhead fishing, with an annual run of approximately 500 adult fish. Grayling are found in the lakes of the upper Naha. ADF&G lists this system as one of 19 "high quality" watersheds in Southeast Alaska for fisheries values. The river has six miles of anadromous habitat. The estimated annual peak escapement is 62,000 pink salmon (USDA Forest Service, 1997). Information from ADF&G escapement surveys indicates that between 1992 and 2001, the Naha River had average peak escapements of 1,000 coho, 97,000 pink, and 4,000 sockeye salmon.

Carroll Creek has approximately 2.5 miles of anadromous fish habitat. It supports runs of pink, coho, and chum salmon, resident Dolly Varden, and rainbow, steelhead, and cutthroat trout.

Traitors Creek, which receives peak escapements of 99,400 pink salmon (ADF&G, 1998), also provides habitat for chum and Coho salmon, Dolly Varden, and steelhead trout (North Revilla FEIS, USDA Forest Service, 1993). Portions of Orchard Creek are also within this roadless area. Cutthroat and Dolly Varden

## Appendix C

fishing is excellent in this creek, with unofficial reports of a near record trout caught at the stream inlet. Kokanee salmon are also present in the system. ADF&G lists this system as one of the 19 “high quality” watersheds in Southeast Alaska for fisheries values.

**(b) Wildlife Resources:** This area has populations of Sitka black-tailed deer, black bear, wolves, otter, marten, mink, loon, and common waterfowl. Marbled murrelets have been found along Carroll Creek and Orchard Creek. Northern goshawks have been found near Traitors Creek, Carroll Creek, and Orchard Lake (USDA Forest Service, 1996; 1997). Trumpeter swans use the major saltwater inlets and freshwater lakes as resting areas during their migrations. Bald eagles nest in the area. Nesting Canada geese have been observed on the Carroll Creek estuary (USDA Forest Service, 1996). Based on tracking from 1985 and 1994, three VCUs that surround George Inlet and Carroll Inlet (VCUs 746, 478, and 753) are in the top 25 percent of black bear harvest. Two VCUs closer to Behm Canal (739 and 744) were listed in the second 25 percent (ADF&G, 1998). There have been occasional reports of brown bear on Revilla Island, but a population has not established (USDA Forest Service, 1997). Mountain goats have been introduced to Revilla Island over the past 17 years. A substantial population now exists near Mount Reid. The population ranges from the ridge above Swan Lake north to the ridge above Orchard Lake. A few goats may range as far south as the head of Calamity Creek (Upper Carroll Timber Sale FEIS, USDA Forest Service, 1996).

The main wildlife dispersal corridors throughout Revilla Island are thought to be the Orchard Creek and Carroll Creek drainages. The Traitors Creek drainage is connected to this corridor through a pass in the northeast portion of the Traitors Creek drainage (USDA Forest Service, 1993). Connectivity to the Naha River drainage is along saltwater. The Carroll Creek estuary is an important wintering area for Canada geese, trumpeter swans, and other waterfowl (USDA Forest Service, 1996).

Based on harvest data compiled from 1985 to 1995, two VCUs located in this area (VCUs 739 and 744) were ranked in the second 25 percent of black bear harvest areas on the Tongass by VCU (ADF&G, 1998).

**(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. 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. Goshawks have been found near Traitors Creek, Carroll Creek, and Orchard Lake and nesting has occurred in the roadless area (USDA Forest Service, 1996; 1997). In addition, eight sensitive plant species are known or suspected to occur in the Ketchikan Ranger District.

**(d) Karst, Cave, and Other Geologic Resources:** There is a swath of mid- to high-vulnerability karst resources that overlaps with this roadless area in two small areas near Painted Peak, Marble and Licking Creek. This represents 750 acres of mostly low vulnerability karst, and less than one percent, of the roadless area. There are no glaciers or unique geologic features.

**(5) Scientific and Educational Values:** There are no Research Natural Areas in the North Revilla Roadless Area. Ketchikan, located less than 5 miles south of the area, is the closest community with school-age children.

**(6) Scenic Values:** The North Revilla Roadless Area is part of the Coastal Hills visual character type which is characterized by moderately steep landforms, predominantly rounded summits, elevations up to 4,500 feet, and flat-floored, U-shaped valleys. Much of the North Revilla Roadless Area's landscape is quite typical of this character type. The more rugged, diverse terrain is at the northern end in the Orchard and upper Carroll Creek valleys. The Naha River drainage at the southern end exhibits more subdued landscapes. The northeast portion of the area

consists of a number of east-west drainages that originate from the ridgeline forming the western boundary of Misty Fjords National Monument.

Overall, the land within this roadless area appears to be in a natural condition. Exceptions include the Swan Lake Hydroelectric Facility and the trails and public recreation cabins located in the area. These modifications have a low impact on the overall natural appearance of the area. However, the developments that have occurred on adjacent lands, as well as the proximity of the Tongass Highway to part of the area, affects the areas near them and the apparent naturalness of parts of this area. This is especially the case in the numerous places where developments extend along drainages into the area. Viewed from nearby travel routes, the area provides a natural backdrop to the developed areas in the foreground.

Visual Priority Routes and Use Areas identified by the Forest Plan that are within or adjacent to the area, include Naha River and Orchard Creek and Lake (Recommended Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers); Clover Passage, Naha Bay, Behm Narrows, Moser Bay, Gedney Passage, Hassler Pass, Traitors Cove, and Carroll Inlet (Saltwater Use Areas); Jordan Lake, Heckman Lake, and Orchard Lake (Public Recreation Cabins); Naha River and Wolf Lake trails (Hiking Trails).

About 10 percent of the area is inventoried as Variety Class A (possessing landscape diversity that is unique for the character type). Approximately 90 percent was rated as Variety Class B (possessing characteristics common in the character type). The class A landscapes are found in the Orchard Creek drainage. The main valley possesses steep, rock-faced walls, with distinct vegetative diversity, while the main channel of this creek also contains many diverse landscape features.

About 84 percent of the area is in a Type I Existing Visual Condition (EVC) where the natural landscape has remained unaltered by human activity. The rest of the area is in an EVC III (2 percent, IV (6 percent), or V (8 percent), where the landscape has been moderately to heavily altered by past logging activity. These latter areas are primarily located around the headwaters of Neets Creek and Traitors Creek.

**(7) Social, Cultural, and Historical Values:** This area has a rich history. Prehistoric and historic Native cultures used this roadless area. A number of prehistoric and historic sites have been identified through archeological surveys, oral histories and other historical records. Their activities mostly centered in the Naha Bay area and probably extended into the interior in the Naha drainage. The Naha River has been an important subsistence use area through recent history, but has limited subsistence use today.

The commercial fishing industry established itself at Loring, which is located on Naha Bay. This site has been continually occupied since the early 1900s. The Naha drainage was open to homesteading and the Orton Ranch owes its origin to this. A fish hatchery was constructed at Heckman Lake in the early 1900s.

The city of Ketchikan and its surroundings are located approximately 2 miles south of this roadless area. Consequently, the southern part of the Revilla Roadless Area has been influenced in the past, and continues to be influenced, by human activity. The Ward Creek drainage was developed by the combination of early 1900s mining, CCC public works projects during the 1930s, and hydropower development in the Swan Lake area. In recent times, the State and Native corporations have made extensive land selections in the headwaters of Ward Creek, along George and Carroll Inlets, and along the south boundary of this roadless area.

Subsistence use occurs in parts of the area. The Tongass Fish and Wildlife Resource Assessment (ADF&G, 1998) indicated that seven of the VCUs covering land between Behm Canal and George and Carroll Inlets (VCUs 735, 736, 737, 744, 746, 748, and 753) are subsistence use areas with a high sensitivity to disturbance. VCU 753 is listed among the VCUs with the highest community use values, One of the VCUs (VCU 747) was included in the second most important group and one (VCU 739) was included in the third most important group for community use values (ADF&G, 1998).

**(8) Manageability as Wilderness and Boundary Conditions/Changes:** The North Revilla Roadless Area is irregularly shaped, with a number of boundaries that do not follow natural topographic features. This is especially the case for the southwest portion of the area, which is bordered by non-National Forest System lands. Manageability of the area as wilderness is also affected by the adjacent areas where road building and timber harvest

## Appendix C

has occurred. Roads and harvest units extend along a number of drainages into the North Revilla Roadless Area, affecting the perceived naturalness of the area, as well as its boundaries. The parts of the north portion of the area that adjoin the Misty Fjords National Monument Wilderness might have higher manageability as wilderness. Other parts of the area would be more difficult to manage in a wilderness or roadless condition. The portion south of Gedney Pass is small and separated from the main part of the roadless area. This area is not very manageable for wilderness, nor does it have high wilderness attributes. The area southwest of the Naha drainage and LUD II is nearly completely bordered by the developed lands of Ketchikan and State and private landowners. Management of this area as wilderness would be very difficult. The small area between the Swan Lake power facility and developed areas to the south along Carroll Inlet are not suitable for management as wilderness.

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

- (1) **Recreation, including Tourism Potential:** This roadless area will continue to receive significant recreation use. It has potential, and a probable need, for additional trails. In 1996, the Alaska Visitor Association (AVA) proposed the following recreation developments in the North Revilla Roadless Area: a day-use wildlife observatory for 25 persons/day in the Naha area; and paths/trails/day boat dock for 6-20 persons/day, flight-seeing landings for 10-50 persons/day, and day-use recreation for 10 persons/day in the Long Lake area.
- (2) **Subsistence Uses:** The existing patterns of subsistence activities in the area would not be affected by wilderness designation.
- (3) **Fish Resources:** There is some potential for fish habitat improvement on streams within the area. Information from the North Revilla FEIS indicates that potential fish rehabilitation projects have been identified in Traitors Creek and Orchard Lake (USDA Forest Service, 1993). There is a fish pass on Margaret Creek that has been recently improved to increase fish access.
- (4) **Wildlife Resources:** No wildlife enhancement projects are planned for this roadless area. There is a wildlife observation site at the Margaret Creek fish pass.
- (5) **Timber Resources:** There are 102,033 acres mapped as productive old growth and 2,235 mapped as second growth in the roadless area. Of these acres, 40,082 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), 10,274 acres or 5 percent of this roadless area are estimated to be suitable for timber production. Approximately 5,596 of the suitable acres are mapped as high-volume old growth; of these acres, 1,212 are mapped as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth.
- (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:** There are no mining claims located within this roadless area and the potential for mineral development is considered to be low. This area contains an estimated 44,368 acres of undiscovered locatable mineral resources (Brew et al., 1990; USDA Forest Service, 1991) that are considered to have very low potential for development.
- (8) **Transportation and Utilities:** A power transmission corridor runs north through this area. The Forest Service has approved a Special Use Permit for Ketchikan Public Utilities to construct the Swan Lake-Lake Tye Intertie Project, a 138-kV electric transmission line that would run through this corridor. Project construction clearing began in 2002. A potential road corridor also runs north through the area. Interest has been expressed in building a road that would provide access from Ketchikan to the northern portion of the island. This road was not included in the March 1999 Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan (Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, 1999). However, the route is included in Southeast Conference for consideration of long-term transportation needs for Southeast Alaska.

- (9) **Water Availability and Use:** The Swan Lake Hydroelectric Project is located in this area. There are no existing or planned water projects within the roadless area and no additional hydroelectric water projects are planned.
- (10) **Areas of Scientific Interest:** There are no areas of scientific interest in this area.
- (11) **Land Use Authorizations:** The Forest Service has issued a Special Use Authorization for the Swan Lake Power line that extends to Ketchikan. The Forest Service has also issued a Special Use Authorization for the construction of the Swan Lake-Tyee Intertie. Clearing of the Intertie right-of-way began in late summer of 2002.
- (12) **Land Status:** All land within the roadless area is part of the National Forest System. Land within this roadless area has encumbrances, primarily located near Ketchikan.

#### **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 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. One of these areas, the Naha River Wilderness, is part of the North Revilla Roadless Area. This area was assigned permanent LUD II status under the 1990 Tongass Timber Reform Act. In 2001, HR 2908 identified the rest of the area as a proposed LUD II addition. The proposal also identified the Naha River lake system, Carroll Creek, and Orchard Creek for protection as Wild and Scenic Rivers.

(c) **Public Input During Forest Plan Revision and Appeals:** This area was specifically addressed in public input received during the Forest Plan revision. Several commenters asked for the protection of natural values, especially roadless recreation in several areas including Orchard Lake and Carroll Inlet. Others felt that better road systems on Revilla Island would benefit Ketchikan residents by creating more recreation opportunities. A petition signed by over 700 Ketchikan residents recommended that existing recreation opportunities on lands near Ketchikan be increased by expanding the existing road system to connect with the roads at Margarita Bay, Traitors Cove, Neets Bay, and Shrimp Bay on the north and the existing roads connecting with those in George Inlet, Carroll Inlet, and Thorne Arm. A few other commenters opposed expansion of the road system. Timber industry representatives wanted timber harvest emphasized in certain areas or throughout the island. Another commenter requested that VCU 732 be managed as Modified Landscape to allow for utility corridor, road, and roaded recreation development.

The town of Loring stated that logging within their watershed was not acceptable. They also stated that Indian Point and east is important for subsistence and should have no logging or road building. Orchard Lake was mentioned by a number of commenters requesting that the area be protected for its wildlife, subsistence, and recreation values. Carroll River Flats was mentioned for protection of its wildlife, subsistence, and recreation values. Another conservation group requested that the proposed road corridor that passes through the Naha LUD II area be relocated. Another commenter requested that the roadless recreation, tourism, hunting, fishing, and scenic resources of the Behm Canal area be protected.

The AVA proposed the following recreation developments in the North Revilla Roadless Area: a day-use wildlife observatory for 25 persons/day in the Naha area; and paths/trails/day boat dock for 6-20 persons/day, flight-seeing landings for 10-50 persons/day, and day-use recreation for 10 persons/day in the Long Lake area.

Parts of the area were also specifically identified in the Forest Plan appeal filed by the Sitka Conservation Society (SCS). The SCS identified Roosevelt Lagoon and Traitors Cove Lagoon as salt chuck areas, which they define as “intertidal bodies of water, typically separated from saltwater by a narrow rocky pass.” They noted that these areas are rare in Southeast Alaska and requested that salt chuck areas be assigned special

## Appendix C

status to protect their biological resources, with no logging allowed. The appeal filed by Susan Walsh requested that the status of Orchard Creek for Wild and Scenic River designation be reviewed.

**(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 North Revilla Roadless Area was included in the project area of three recent project-level EISs:

- North Revilla FEIS (USDA Forest Service, 1993)
- Upper Carroll Timber Sale FEIS (USDA Forest Service, 1996)
- Swan Lake-Lake Tye Intertie FEIS (USDA Forest Service, 1996)

Public comments that were received on these EISs and addressed road-related issues included the following:

**North Revilla**—No roadless issues listed.

**Upper Carroll**—Development of this area would create more roaded recreation, which the people of this area want. Roads would adversely affect fish and the Neets Bay hatchery. Road connections to Ketchikan, Shelter Cove, Shrimp Bay, and Fire Cove would be a great benefit to the community.

**Swan Lake**—The Ketchikan Indian Corporation opposed roads in the Carroll Inlet area because of their potential effect on fisheries and land animals. Roads in this area would also encourage members of the public to compete with native communities for subsistence resources. Others requested that the Orchard Lake area be kept as natural as possible. There should be no roads west of Bluff Lake because of the adverse effects on the Neets Bay hatchery's water supply. The City of Ketchikan, the Ketchikan Public Utility, and others supported access roads.

**(f) Public Input Expressed During Supplemental EIS Process:** The Alaska Department of Fish and Game rated the North Revilla roadless area (VCU 743) as the second 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.

The city of Pelican passed a resolution stating that the important watersheds identified as areas of special interest in the 1999 ROD and HR 987 should given long-term protection.

SEACC recommended this area for LUD II designation. The Alaska Rainforest Campaign (a coalition of national and Alaska conservation groups) recommended Roadless Area 526 for permanent protection as LUD II. The Tongass Conservation Society recommended North and South Revilla roadless area for long-term protection from logging and development.

A number of cave/karst experts and other individuals stated both the North Revilla and South Revilla Roadless Areas contain significant karstlands. They indicated that significant karstlands, approximately 1,100 acres, bracket a logged and roaded area in South Revilla Roadless Area; the karstlands, together with karstlands in the adjacent roaded areas, should be protected.

Some individuals called for long-term protection of this area. At least one individual recommended the area between Moser Bay and Naha for protection.

**(2) Nearby Roadless and Wilderness Areas and Uses:** The North Revilla roadless area is part of a larger unroaded land area. This larger area includes the Misty Fiords National Monument Wilderness. The Revilla (#524) and South Revilla (#523) Roadless Areas are located south of the area. The Behm Islands Roadless Area (#525) is located west. The North Cleveland Roadless Area is located north across Behm Narrows from the area.

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

Community	Air Miles	Water Miles
Juneau (Pop. 30,711)	200	255
Ketchikan (Pop. 14,070)	5	40
Wrangell (Pop. 2,308)	50	115
Petersburg (Pop. 3,324)	80	135

**(4) Relative Contribution to the National Wilderness Preservation System:** The North Revilla Roadless Area is located on the west coast of Revillagigedo (Revilla) Island, and is bordered to the east by Misty Fiords National Monument Wilderness. Behm Canal borders the area to the north. The area is generally bordered to the west by saltwater and areas of timber harvest and associated roads. The west shoreline of the area has been developed from Naha Bay north to Gedney Pass, with roads and harvest units extending along drainages into the North Revilla Roadless Area. The southwest part of the area is bordered to the west by the North Tongass Highway. Development has also occurred on both sides of Carroll Inlet, which extends into the area. Non-National Forest System lands, forest roads, and timber harvest units border the area to the south. The area is characterized by rugged terrain. Mountain slopes are steep, causing deeply incised drainages. The north portion of the area is dominated by an extensive lake chain associated with the Naha River and its tributaries. Elevation ranges from sea level to over 4,000 feet.

This large area is mostly natural appearing, but is influenced along its borders in many places by ongoing urban developments and developments associated with timber management on State, private and federal lands. The area has relatively high natural integrity and moderate apparent naturalness. The area southwest of the Naha LUD II area has moderate natural integrity and apparent naturalness. The Naha LUD II has high natural integrity and very high apparent naturalness. The Orchard Lake drainage has very high natural integrity and apparent naturalness. The northernmost peninsula of the roadless area has high natural integrity and apparent naturalness. The relatively small peninsula near Gedney Pass has moderate natural integrity and low apparent naturalness. The opportunity for solitude is high and the opportunity for primitive recreation is very high.

The area has moderate to high scenic quality; approximately 10 percent of the landscape is considered distinctive from a scenery standpoint. The Naha River drainage includes a system of large lakes with cabins and trail access provided. This area was designated as a LUD II area by Congress in 1990. The area has a few areas of karst development.

The roadless area includes about 64,804 acres of high-volume, old-growth forest. Of these acres, approximately 10,835 are mapped as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. It ranks among the top five Tongass roadless areas in terms of acres of high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth; the majority of this old growth is contained within non-development LUDs.

The North Revilla Roadless Area is classified as being in the Revilla Island/Cleveland Peninsula Biogeographic Province and makes up about 17 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 Fiords 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 North Revilla Roadless Area lies within two ecological sections; it represents 8 percent of the Inside Passage Fjordlands Ecological Section and 0.1 percent of the Dixon Entrance Lowlands Ecological Section. Both of these ecological sections are well represented by existing wilderness (20 and 56 percent, respectively) and by other existing non-development LUDs (32 and 28 percent, including 2 and 1 percent in LUD II, respectively).

More than half (56 percent) of the roadless area is in the Traitors Cove Metasediments Ecological Subsection; this portion of the roadless area represents 39 percent of the entire ecological subsection, 10 percent of which is protected in existing LUD II and 26 percent in other existing non-development LUDs. The Behm Canal Complex Ecological Subsection covers 30 percent of the roadless area; accounting for 29 percent of the ecological subsection,

## Appendix C

65 percent of which is in existing wilderness and 18 percent is protected by other existing non-development LUDs. Fourteen percent of the roadless area is in the Bell Island Granitics Ecological Subsection; this portion of the roadless area represents 10 percent of the entire ecological subsection, 14 percent of which is in existing wilderness, 9 percent in LUD II, and is well represented by other existing non-development LUDs (57 percent). Less than 1 percent of the roadless area is in the Princess Bay Volcanics Ecological Subsection; this portion represents 5 percent of the entire ecological subsection. Approximately 62 percent of this ecological subsection is protected in existing wilderness and 8 percent in other existing non-development LUDs.

The North Revilla Roadless Area was rated 20 out of a possible 28 points under the Wilderness Attribute Rating System (WARS). As such, its WARS rating is ranked 53<sup>rd</sup> from the highest (along with 16 other roadless areas) among the 109 Tongass inventoried roadless areas. Because of the large size of the roadless area and the degree of fragmentation created by ongoing developments on adjacent lands, five areas were rated separately. The area southwest of the Naha LUD II rated 19, the Naha LUD II rated 22, the Orchard Lake drainage rated 23, the peninsula located on the very north of the roadless area rated 21, and the relatively small peninsula located near Gedney Pass rated 18.

There is both local and national support for managing this area in an unroaded condition, but little support for designation of this area as wilderness. Designation would create a large wilderness that is influenced in many places by adjacent developments and uses. Some of the areas, such as in the Naha LUD II area receive very high public use that may be in conflict with wilderness objectives. The area includes the corridor for the Swan Lake, Lake Tyee Intertie powerline which is authorized and permitted for construction that began in 2002. The Upper Carroll Timber Sale is also located within the roadless area and is under contract. The degree of timber harvest in adjacent lands adds importance to the old growth within the roadless area. Overall, the factors identified here indicate that the relative contribution of this area to the National Wilderness Preservation System would be low to moderate.

### V. Environmental Consequences

The North Revilla Roadless Area would be managed under the existing Forest Plan if Alternative 1, 3, or 4 is implemented. Approximately 61 percent of the roadless area would be managed under non-development LUDs. Timber harvest and road development could occur within the remaining 39 percent of the roadless area. The land in the development LUDs includes an estimated 10,274 acres that are suitable for timber production (17 percent of the suitable acres on the Ketchikan/Misty Fiords Ranger District). Approximately 1,212 of the suitable acres are classified as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. The Upper Carroll Timber Sale Contract would continue. Construction of the Swan Lake-Lake Tyee powerline intertie would continue. This area contains an estimated 44,368 acres of undiscovered locatable mineral resources that are considered to have very low potential for development. The recreation, minerals, and special use programs would continue. The values associated with the natural settings of the roadless area could be affected by ongoing development activities in those areas allowed by the Forest Plan.

Under Alternatives 2, 5, or 7, all of the existing LUD II area would be converted to Recommended Wilderness LUD. This would not affect timber sale projects because this area is currently allocated to a non-development LUD. The total area suitable for timber production would not change from Alternative 1. Ongoing recreation, special use, and minerals programs could be restricted in the Recommended Wilderness LUD area. Mineral prospecting would be allowed in the Recommended Wilderness LUD up to the time that the area is actually designated as wilderness by Congress. The values associated with the natural settings of the existing LUD II portion of the roadless area, including old growth values, would be provided long-term protection if designated wilderness.

Under Alternative 6, a 194,128-acre portion of the area would be converted to Recommended LUD II. This would convert all lands not currently designated to LUD II to Recommended LUD II. Ongoing recreation, special use, and minerals programs would continue similar to current conditions with little restriction. No timber harvest would be allowed. The values associated with the natural settings of the roadless area, including old growth 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. Ongoing recreation, special use, and minerals programs could be restricted. No timber harvest would be allowed. Mineral prospecting would be allowed in the Recommended Wilderness LUD up to the time that the area is actually

## Appendix C

designated as wilderness by Congress. The values associated with the natural settings of the roadless area, including old growth values, would be provided long-term protection if designated wilderness.

<b>Land Use Designation Allocations and Suitable Timber Lands by Alternative for Roadless Area 526 (in acres)</b>								
<b>Land Use Designation</b>	<b>Alt 1</b>	<b>Alt 2</b>	<b>Alt 3</b>	<b>Alt 4</b>	<b>Alt 5</b>	<b>Alt 6</b>	<b>Alt 7</b>	<b>Alt 8</b>
<b>Recommended Wilderness</b>		31,316			31,473		31,473	225,444
<b>Wilderness</b>								
<b>Recommended Wilderness Nat. Mon.</b>								
<b>Wilderness National Monument</b>								
<b>Non-wilderness National Monument</b>								
<b>Research Natural Area</b>								
<b>Special Interest Area</b>	1,272	1,272	1,272	1,272	1,272		1,272	
<b>Remote Recreation</b>	24,664	24,664	24,664	24,664	24,664		24,664	
<b>Enacted Municipal Watershed</b>								
<b>Old-growth Habitat</b>	31,364	31,364	31,364	31,364	31,361		31,361	
<b>Semi-remote Recreation</b>	38,285	38,285	38,285	38,285	38,278		38,278	
<b>Recommended LUD II</b>						194,128		
<b>LUD II</b>	31,316		31,316	31,316		31,316		
<b>Wild, Scenic, Recreational River</b>	10,018	10,018	10,018	10,018	10,014		10,014	
<b>Experimental Forest</b>								
<b>Scenic Viewshed</b>	11,830	11,830	11,830	11,830	11,775		11,775	
<b>Modified Landscape</b>	14,991	14,991	14,991	14,991	14,942		14,942	
<b>Timber production</b>	61,704	61,704	61,704	61,704	61,664		61,664	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>225,444</b>	<b>225,444</b>	<b>225,444</b>	<b>225,444</b>	<b>225,444</b>	<b>225,444</b>	<b>225,444</b>	<b>225,444</b>
<b>Suitable Timber Lands</b>	10,274	10,274	10,274	10,274	10,252	0	10,252	0