

INDIVIDUAL ROADLESS AREA DESCRIPTION

ROADLESS AREA NAME: Missionary (212)

ACRES (NFS): 14,825

BIOGEOGRAPHIC PROVINCE: Kupreanof/Mitkof Islands

ECOLOGICAL SECTION: Inside Passage Fjordlands

2003 WILDERNESS ATTRIBUTE RATING: 16

I. Overview and Description

(1) **Location and Access:** The Missionary Roadless Area lies at the north end of the Lindenberg Peninsula on Kupreanof Island along the southern shore of Frederick Sound. The community of Kake lies 25 air miles to the west, and the community of Petersburg lies about 10 miles to the south. Petersburg and Kake are served by the Alaska Marine Highway and Petersburg has daily jet service. Access to the Missionary Roadless Area is by floatplane or boat. From Portage Bay to the east, a logging road system accesses three sides of this roadless area but does not connect to any community. There are no sites suitable for landing wheeled aircraft or floatplanes in the interior of this area. Access into the interior is by foot or helicopter.

(2) **History:** The area lies within the traditional territory of the Stikine Tlingit. Cultural resources have been identified along the coast adjacent to the area. These include historic period cabins, culturally modified trees, and prehistoric period, fish traps, camps and villages. No known cultural sites exist inland. Relatively extensive road construction and timber harvest has occurred around nearly the entire area and some timber has been harvested within the area.

(3) **Geography and Topography:** This area's most predominant feature is the Missionary Mountain Range, a small alpine region of approximately 15 square miles. It includes 7 peaks over 3,000 feet in elevation, the highest being Kane Peak at 3,250 feet. The alpine reaches exhibit precipitous bare rock summits with connecting ridgelines. Four glacial cirque lakes are present with a combined size of 63 acres. The majority of the roadless area (75 percent), is forested and includes the lower elevations below alpine to the road system adjacent saltwater. The slopes below alpine are moderate to high in steepness and mostly uniform. The area contains the watersheds of three medium-sized streams and several small streams that empty directly to saltwater. Except for Twelvemile Creek, which form the southeast boundary, the streams within the area are high gradient and generally short and include the headwaters of Todahl Creek and Portage Creek. The roadless area is connected to saltwater for about 2 miles north of the mouth of Twelvemile Creek. Rock covers approximately 76 acres in this area and there are no acres mapped as alpine or icefield.

(4) **Ecosystem:**

(a) **Classification: Biogeographic Province.** The area is classified as being in the Kupreanof/Mitkof Islands Biogeographic Province. This province is characterized by generally subdued, rolling topography and extensive muskeg areas, with localized, rugged topography. Uncharacteristically, this roadless area has rugged topography, and glacial cirques lakes are present.

Ecological Section/Subsection. The Missionary Roadless Area is contained entirely within the Inside Passage Fjordlands Ecological Section (M247E), Wrangell Narrows Metasediments Ecological Subsection (see table below). Mountains of sedimentary origin have been extensively reshaped by glaciers and glacial deposition. Slopes are forested with hemlock, spruce, and cedar while lodgepole pine and mixed-conifer stands are found in poorly drained soils. Wetlands are common in low relief, depositional areas. Thick peat deposits have accumulated in some sites with poor drainage (Nowacki et al., 2001).

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Ecological Section	Ecological Subsection	Percent of Roadless Area
Inside Passage Fjordlands	Wrangell Narrows Metasediments	100%

(b) Soils: Soils in this area are formed in a wide variety of parent materials, including bedrock and glacial drift. In general, well- or moderately-well-drained soils are on moderate to steep mountain slopes with permeable parent materials. These soils are very acidic, have cold soil temperatures, and are very high in organic matter. Rooting is largely limited to the surface organic layers and the top few inches of mineral soil. These soils are usually moist, sometimes wet, but are never dry.

Poorly-drained soils developed on less sloping areas and/or areas with impermeable soil materials. These soils have deep accumulations of organic matter and range from forested wetlands to open muskeg.

Alpine soils, generally above 2,000 feet in elevation, are mostly shallow, very wet organic soils or are extremely shallow and rocky.

(c) Vegetation: Spruce-hemlock forests dominate the mountainsides of this area. Alpine vegetation dominates the mountain ridge tops. There are minor amounts of muskeg in small pockets.

There are approximately 13,332 acres mapped as forest land of which 7,115 acres or 53 percent are mapped as productive old-growth forest. Of the productive old growth, 3,144 acres or 44 percent are mapped as high-volume old-growth forest. The productive old growth includes about 554 acres of high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. There are about 193 acres of second-growth forest where helicopter harvest occurred in the late 1990s.

(d) Fish Resources: The streams in this roadless area include the headwaters of Todahl Creek and Portage Creek, and parts of Twelvemile Creek. Grayling, was introduced into Kane Lake. These streams support runs of steelhead and cutthroat trout, Dolly Varden char, and pink, chum, and coho salmon.

(e) Wildlife Resources: Sitka black-tailed deer, moose, black bears use this roadless area. Wolves are located across all habitat types. Mink, river otters, beaver, marten, ermine, red squirrel, mice, shrews, and voles are well distributed. Fishers and wolverines are incidental species. The northern flying squirrel has been migrating to Kupreanof Island but is not yet well distributed on the island; some may occur within this roadless area.

Bald eagles, northern goshawks, red-tailed hawks, sharp-shinned hawks, great horned owls, western screech owls, saw-whet owls, pigmy owls, spruce grouse, and ptarmigan all occur on within the roadless area. Bats are present during the summer months and may over winter.

Numerous species of ducks and geese, trumpeter swans, marbled murrelets, and great blue herons have been seen within this roadless area, both during migration and, in some cases, during the nesting season.

Red-throated, Pacific, and common loons all occur on Kupreanof Island. Several plover, yellowlegs, and sandpiper species occur, mainly along the river corridors and in large muskeg systems. Two swift species, one hummingbird species, four woodpecker species, three flycatcher species, and five swallow species are also known on the island. Steller's jay, northwestern crow and common raven all occur. Chestnut-backed chickadee, red-breasted nuthatch, brown creeper, winter wren, American dipper, golden-crowned kinglet, ruby-crowned kinglet, Swainson's thrush and hermit thrush occur. American robin, varied thrush, American pipit, cedar waxwing, northern shrike, warbling vireo, and five warbler species occur. Additionally, the northern water thrush, common yellow throat, western tanager, dark-eyed junco, Lapland longspur, snow bunting, red-winged blackbird, rusty blackbird, brown-headed cowbird, eight sparrow species, pine grosbeak, red crossbill, white-winged crossbill, common redpoll, and pine siskin are found.

Amphibians known to occur on Kupreanof Island include the rough-skinned newt and western toad. The rough-skinned newt is found primarily in lacustrine, palustrine, hemlock/spruce forests and muskeg bog

ecosystems. The western toad is also found primarily in lacustrine, palustrine, hemlock/spruce forests, and in clearcuts.

Sea mammals known to inhabit the waters surrounding Kupreanof Island are the Pacific white-sided dolphin, orca whale, harbor porpoise, Dall’s porpoise, humpback whale, Steller sea lion, and harbor seal. Frederick Sound to the north of this roadless area has large populations of humpback whales during the summer and fall.

(5) Management Direction and Current Uses: This area was allocated to four Land Use Designations (LUDs) in the 1997 Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan. These four LUDs are Scenic Viewshed, Modified Landscape, Timber Production, and Old-growth Habitat.

LUD	Acres
Scenic Viewshed	4,571
Modified Landscape	3,376
Timber Production	469
Old-growth Habitat	6,409

Most of the area, approximately 57 percent, was allocated to one of three development LUDs (Scenic Viewshed, Modified Landscape, Timber Production). Approximately 31 of the roadless area was allocated to the Scenic Viewshed LUD. This LUD is located in the northern part of the Missionary roadless area where the landscape can be seen from Frederick Sound. The Modified Landscape LUD, was assigned to approximately 23 percent of the roadless area. This LUD is located in the less frequently seen areas south of Frederick Sound. Approximately 3 percent of the roadless area was allocated to the Timber Production LUD, located along and near Twelvemile Creek.

Approximately 43 percent of this roadless area was allocated to one non-development LUD, Old-growth Habitat. The Old-growth Habitat LUD is located on the south slope of the Missionary Range and near Cape Strait. Several miles of road were decommissioned in this LUD in 1999 to be compatible with the prescription.

Fishing and hunting are the main recreational uses in the area. One of the lakes, Kane Lake, was stocked with grayling and receives occasional use. Deer hunting was closed in the area from 1975 until 1993 but is currently permitted. Most use is concentrated along the outside edges of the area, which are accessible by roads from Portage Bay, but overall use levels are low. There is some subsistence use in the area.

Bohemia Timber Sale, Alternatives-to-Clearcutting Research Study and Scattered Timber Sale have harvested units by helicopter within this roadless area in the late 1990s. The Todahl Backline Timber Sale in the northern part is currently under contract but has not been harvested and will remove trees on one to two acre patches by helicopter logging. In the southeastern part, analysis is ongoing for the Scott Peak Project Area, a proposed timber harvest area where roads may be constructed. No proposed units have been defined at this time.

(6) Appearance (Apparent Naturalness): About one-third of the area appears unmodified, mainly the Missionary Range. The remainder of the area has been heavily influenced by adjacent management activities, mainly timber harvest and roads. The area includes over 100 helicopter units, 2 to 3 acres each, that have been harvested or are under contract. One larger clearcut in the western part of the area, which was helicopter logged, potentially isolates the northwest section from the rest of the roadless area.

(7) Surroundings (External Influences): The eastern boundary of the roadless area is adjacent to Roadless Area 213. The two roadless areas share a 1-mile long boundary. Roads and timber management activities occur on three sides of the roadless area. Also, roads nearly bisect the area. Noise and sights of vehicles and active timber sales may occur periodically, being greatest in magnitude near the roads and lessening as one moves away. Portage Bay, adjacent to the west of this roadless area, has a log transfer facility and logging camp. At times, it is busy with activity. Frederick Sound, which receives heavy boat traffic, is adjacent to the northeast boundary of the area. Low-flying aircraft may temporarily distract visitors in the area.

(8) Attractions and Features of Special Interest: Although the area is relatively close to Petersburg and there are anchorages in Portage Bay, there are few attractions that have historically drawn visitors into the roadless

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area. The area contains one inventoried recreation place, which covers 86 acres, or less than 1 percent of the roadless area. The main attractions are opportunities for black bear and deer hunting when the season is open, and grayling fishing in the Kane Lake where they have been introduced.

(9) Differences between the 1989 and 2003 Roadless Area Boundary: A triangular-shaped area between road corridors has been added to the roadless area in the southeast, near the boundary with Roadless Area 213. This area has been taken out of the roadless area for the Final SEIS because of the relatively small size and how the existing roads pinch off the area from the main part of the roadless area.

II. Capability for Management as Wilderness

(1) Natural Integrity and Apparent Naturalness: Some of the area has been modified by timber harvest, while the remainder appears unmodified; however its overall appearance is not considered pristine. The irregular shape of the area, and the roads and timber harvest up the Todahl Creek and Portage Creek valleys, also have negatively affected the area's natural integrity and apparent naturalness. The entire area is less than 2 miles from a road.

(2) Opportunity for Solitude and Serenity, Self-reliance, Adventure, Challenging Experiences, and Primitive Recreation: There is a moderate opportunity for solitude within the area. Air and boat traffic, and occasional vehicle traffic pass nearby, and may be heard and observed by people in this roadless area. Overall recreation use levels are low, being higher near road and water access. Generally, a person camped or traveling inland is unlikely to encounter others. Timber harvest or other activities in the adjacent areas, which occur periodically, could have a significant impact on the opportunity for solitude when they are occurring. The mountainous terrain and the heavy vegetation at lower elevations provides a visitor the opportunity to find locations remote from the sights and sounds of human activity. The area is accessible from the community of Petersburg by boat, float plane, and helicopter.

Travel on land is difficult, offering a high degree of physical challenge. As with all backcountry areas on the Tongass, the opportunity for challenge and risk in this area is high. The climate, the rugged terrain, the isolation and distance from population centers with medical facilities, the barriers to communication, and the presence of large wild animals all contribute to the need for good preparation and knowledge of backcountry survival skills for anyone using this area. Hypothermia and bear encounters are just two examples of the many risks that must be considered before traveling in the backcountry of Southeast Alaska.

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

ROS Class	Acres	Percent of Total ROS
Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized (SPNM)	7,752	52%
Semi-Primitive Motorized (SPM)	405	3%
Roaded Modified (RM)	6,668	45%

The area contains one inventoried recreation place, which covers 86 acres, or less than 1 percent of the roadless area.

ROS Class	# of Rec. Places*	Total Acres
SPNM	0	0
SPM	1	84
RM	1	2

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

There are no developed recreation opportunities in this area. Recreation includes deer hunting when the season is open, and grayling fishing in the one lake where they are found. Commercial guides use the area for nature tours, freshwater fishing, and black bear hunting.

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

The inventoried roadless areas of the Tongass National Forest were rated according to this system in 1989 for the original Analysis of the Management Situation developed in support of the Forest Plan Revision. At that time, the Missionary Roadless Area was given a rating of 23 out of 28 possible points. The rating was re-evaluated for this updated version of the Analysis of the Management Situation. Based on this re-evaluation, the area was given a rating of 16. This rating better reflects the degree of developments on adjacent lands and their effects on the wilderness attributes of this relatively small area.

(4) Ecologic and Geologic Values:

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

Twelvemile Creek is the only Class I stream within this roadless area. Tributaries of Portage Creek and Todahl Creek, both Class I streams are also in the area. Portions of the three largest stream's watersheds in this area (Todahl, Portage, and parts of Twelvemile Creek) have been developed. There are two fish ladders in Portage Creek that will enable coho salmon to utilize an extensive area of upstream habitat.

(b) Wildlife Resources: Sitka black-tailed deer and moose are present but the majority of this roadless area has only moderate habitat qualities for deer. However, deer populations are increasing from the low populations that occurred during the 1960s and 1970s. Moose have just recently established themselves in this area. Black bears are abundant and hunted in this area from the adjacent road system. Wolves use this area in conjunction with the rest of Kupreanof Island. Furbearers such as mink, river otters, beaver, marten, and ermine are well distributed and some trapping occurs. There is a key wildlife and waterfowl migration route on the isthmus between Duncan Salt Chuck and Portage Bay to the southwest of this roadless area. Fivemile Creek attracts waterfowl. The saltwater to the north contains some of the highest population densities of humpback whales in Southeast Alaska that provide wildlife viewing opportunities.

(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 sighted in the general area. In addition, twelve sensitive plant species are known or suspected to occur in the Petersburg Ranger District.

(d) Karst, Cave, and Other Geologic Resources: There are no known karst or cave resources in this roadless area. A unique geologic feature is an unusual mineral outcrop located near the east side of the area. There are no glaciers in the area.

(5) Scientific and Educational Values: The grayling stocked in one small lake could be studied to see the effects of a non-native species. An unusual mineral outcrop is located near the east side of the area.

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(6) Scenic Values: The area is mostly unmodified; however its overall integrity is not considered pristine. The irregular shape of the area, and the roads and timber harvest up the Todahl Creek and Portage Creek valleys, have negatively affected the area's apparent naturalness.

Visual Priority Routes and Use Areas identified by the Forest Plan, that are within or adjacent to the area include: Frederick Sound, a part of the Alaska Marine Highway, a tour ship route, and a saltwater use area; Portage Bay, a boat anchorage and saltwater use area; and the Portage Bay public recreation cabin.

Thirty-five percent of this roadless area is inventoried in Variety Class A (possessing landscape diversity that is unique for the character type) and 64 percent of the acreage is inventoried as Variety Class B (possessing landscape diversity that is common for the character type). About 1 percent of the area is inventoried in Variety Class C (possessing a low degree of landscape diversity).

About 34 percent of the area is in EVC I; these areas appear to be untouched by human activity. About 31 percent is in EVC IV, in which changes to the landscape are easily noticed by the average person and may attract some attention. The disturbances are apparent, but resemble natural patterns. About 35 percent of the area is in Existing Visual Condition (EVC) V. These are areas in which changes to the landscape are obvious to the average person, and appear to be major disturbances.

(7) Social, Cultural, and Historical Values: The area lies within the traditional territory of the Stikine Tlingit. No known cultural sites exist in the area, though cultural resources have been identified along the adjacent coast. These include historic period cabins, culturally modified trees, and prehistoric period fish traps, camps and villages. Relatively extensive road construction and timber harvest has occurred around nearly the entire area and some timber has been harvested within the area. Aside from timber management, the road system provides access to fishing, hunting, and trapping destinations. Recreation use of the area is moderate. Sport fishing and trapping occurs at the mouth of Twelvemile Creek. Use will probably remain the same until connected to a community by road or public boat service. None of the VCUs in this area were listed among the VCUs with high community use values. VCUs 443 and 444, the majority of the roadless area, were listed among the VCUs with the highest sensitivity to disturbance of subsistence use areas (ADF&G, 1998).

(8) Manageability as Wilderness and Boundaries Conditions/Changes: The area is bounded on three sides by roads and timber management activities. It has a narrow connection with Roadless Area 213 on the northeast boundary. Development has affected parts of the interior of the roadless area. There are few topographic breaks or other natural features to use as a boundary since timber harvest units are on the lower slopes of the mountains. Feasibility of management in a wilderness condition is low to moderate, due to the amount of timber management activities adjacent to this roadless area, the odd shape, relatively small size, and lack of definable boundary.

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

(1) Recreation, Including Tourism Potential: There is some potential for outfitter and guide permits, trails, and cabins and/or shelters. There were four outfitter/guide permits issued in 2000 (11 service days for freshwater fishing, 4 for remote setting nature tours, and 2 for black bear hunting).

(2) Subsistence Uses: Management as a wilderness or in an unroaded condition is not likely to affect existing subsistence uses.

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

(4) Wildlife Resources: No wildlife habitat enhancement projects are planned within the roadless area.

(5) Timber Resources: There are approximately 7,115 acres mapped as productive old-growth forest in the roadless area. There are also 193 acres mapped as second growth due to timber harvest. Of this area, 3,987 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), 1,709 acres, or 12 percent of this roadless area are

estimated to be suitable for timber production. Approximately 703 of the suitable acres are mapped as high-volume old growth; of these acres, 122 are mapped as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth.

A road system is already in place adjacent to most of the suitable timber and a log transfer facility exists. Nearby roads could be extended to access remaining timber.

(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:** The area has low minerals potential. Although claims have been filed on locations within the area in the past, no development has occurred.

The roadless area contains an estimated 70 acres of undiscovered locatable mineral resources (Brew et al., 1990; USDA Forest Service, 1991). All of these acres are considered to have low potential for development.

(8) **Transportation and Utilities:** The road on the south side of the roadless area is part of a possible transportation corridor linking Kake and Petersburg. The corridor follows existing roads, for the most part, between Kake and Twelvemile Creek, with a new road segment on the east side of the island along Frederick Sound following the shoreline, leading to a new channel-crossing ferry across Wrangell Narrows to the city of Petersburg. This road was considered in the planning process for the Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan (1999). Construction of this road was not recommended as part of the initial implementation the plan. This route is also included as a route for consideration by Southeast Conference in their ongoing assessment of long-term transportation needs for Southeast Alaska. It was recommended for further evaluation if travel demand grows. There is also a potential utility corridor following the same basic route as the transportation corridor described above and south of the roadless area that could connect Petersburg and Kake as part of a power grid for Southeast Alaska.

(9) **Water Availability and Use:** No developed recreation or other facilities exist to create a water demand. There are no existing or planned hydroelectric or domestic water projects in the area.

(10) **Areas of Scientific Interest:** The area has not been identified as a potential Research Natural Area or for any other scientific purpose. There is an unusual mineral outcrop on the east side of the area.

(11) **Land Use Authorizations:** There are no special use authorizations within the roadless Area.

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

IV. Wilderness Evaluation (Need for Wilderness)

(1) Public and Congressional Interest:

(a) **Interest Expressed by Local Users and Residents:** Portions of the area are traditional and/or popular recreation areas.

(b) **Congressional Interest:** In 1989, U.S. House of Representatives Bill HR 987 proposed to designate 23 areas for wilderness on the Tongass National Forest. The bill did not include this area. In 2001, HR 2908 did not propose that the roadless area be designated as wilderness. However, it does recommend that most of the roadless area be classified as a Congressionally Designated LUD II area and managed in an unroaded condition.

(c) **Public Input During Forest Plan Revision and Appeals:** There were no specific comments on this roadless area.

(d) **Public Input During Roadless Area Conservation Rule and Road Management Policy Review:** This area was not specifically identified in the public comments on the Roadless Area Conservation Rule or Road Management Policy Review. However, some commenters wanted all unroaded lands on the Tongass to be protected from development.

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(e) Public Input Expressed for Project-level EISs and Other Input: There was a concern about reducing the roadless area as part of the Todahl Backline EA and about the perceived loss of a semi-primitive recreation area. There were also general comments that roads on the island should either be maintained or closed. Many thought that there should be fewer roads. Some wanted to see helicopters used for timber harvest rather than building more roads. Other opinions were that this area should be used for timber harvest and road system development should occur.

(f) Public Input Expressed During Supplemental EIS Process: The city of Petersburg said they were opposed to designation of this area as wilderness because of the potential long-term economic impacts on the city.

The Alaska Rainforest Campaign (a coalition of national and Alaska conservation groups) recommended Roadless Area 212 for permanent protection as LUD II. SEACC recommended that the remaining unlogged portions of northern Kupreanof Island (Roadless Areas 211, 212, and 213) be designated LUD II to safeguard their valuable fish and wildlife habitat important for subsistence, fishing, and hunting for residents of Kake and Petersburg.

(2) Nearby Roadless and Wilderness Areas and Uses: The nearest roadless areas are the adjacent Fivemile (#213) and North Kupreanof (#211) Roadless Areas to the west. The Petersburg Creek-Duncan Salt Chuck Wilderness is located 4 miles to the south.

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

Community	Air Miles	Water Miles
Juneau (Pop. 30,711)	100	105
Ketchikan (Pop. 14,070)	120	140
Wrangell (Pop. 2,308)	45	45
Petersburg (Pop. 3,324)	10	15

Petersburg is the nearest stop on the Alaska Marine Highway.

(4) Relative Contribution to the National Wilderness Preservation System: The Missionary Roadless Area lies at the north end of the Lindenberg Peninsula on Kupreanof Island along the southern shore of Frederick Sound. The area is dominated by the upper portion of the Missionary Mountain Range. These mountains are characterized by steep slopes, glacial cirque lakes, and an alpine ridge line. Elevation ranges from sea level to 3,250 feet at Kane Peak. The area contains 1 mile of shoreline on Frederick Sound. There are four lakes high on the flanks of the mountains. The majority of the area is covered by forest. The roadless area is serpentine in shape and fragmented by adjacent developed areas.

The area is heavily influenced by developments and related activities on nearby lands. It is also somewhat influenced by at least three areas where helicopter yarded timber harvests have occurred in the past within the roadless area. The natural integrity and apparent naturalness of the area is moderate. The opportunity for solitude and primitive recreation is also considered moderate for the roadless area.

Approximately 35 percent of the landscape, mostly associated with Kane Peak, is considered distinctive for the character type from a scenery perspective. The area does not have any other significant or unique features or values.

The roadless area includes about 3,144 acres of high-volume, old-growth forest. Of these acres, 554 are mapped as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth.

The Missionary Roadless Area is classified as being in the Kupreanof/Mitkof Islands Biogeographic Province and makes up about 2 percent of the province. It is one 12 of inventoried roadless areas found within the province that collectively make up about 63 percent of the province. The Petersburg Creek-Duncan Salt Chuck Wilderness is located in this province and makes up about 6 percent of the province.

The Missionary 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 an additional 30 percent is protected by other existing non-development LUDs.

The Missionary Roadless Area lies completely within the Wrangell Narrows Metasediments Ecological Subsection and represents 5 percent of the ecological subsection. The subsection is protected by existing wilderness (11 percent) and other non-development LUDs (18 percent).

The Missionary Roadless Area was rated 16 out of a possible 28 points under the Wilderness Attribute Rating System (WARS). As such, its WARS rating is ranked 98th from the highest (along with four other roadless areas) among the 115 Tongass inventoried roadless areas.

There is some local and national support for management of the area in an unroaded condition, and very little support for designation of the area as wilderness. Designation would create a wilderness with very few significant or unique features, and that is heavily influenced by developments on adjacent lands. The area also includes timber sales under contract. Overall, the factors identified here indicate that the relative contribution of this area to the National Wilderness Preservation System would be very low.

V. Environmental Consequences

The Missionary Roadless Area would be managed under the existing Forest Plan if Alternative 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 7 is implemented. Approximately 43 percent of the roadless area would be managed under non-development LUDs. Timber harvest and road development could occur in the remaining 57 percent. The land in the development LUDs provides an estimated 1,709 acres that are suitable for timber production (2 percent of the suitable acres on the Petersburg Ranger District). Approximately 122 of the suitable acres are classified as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. The timber sales that are under contract will continue. The roadless area contains an estimated 70 acres of undiscovered locatable mineral resources; all of the acres are considered to have low potential for development. The timber sales, recreation, minerals, and special use programs would continue. The values associated with the natural settings of this roadless area would be affected by ongoing developments.

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

Under Alternative 8, the entire roadless area would be converted to Recommended Wilderness. No timber harvest would be allowed and the ongoing recreation, minerals, and special uses programs 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 would be provided long-term protection if designated wilderness.

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Land Use Designation Allocations and Suitable Timber Lands by Alternative for Roadless Area 212 (in acres)								
Land Use Designation	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7	Alt 8
Recommended Wilderness								14,825
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	6,409	6,409	6,409	6,409	6,409		6,409	
Semi-remote Recreation								
Recommended LUD II						14,825		
LUD II								
Wild, Scenic, Recreational River								
Experimental Forest								
Scenic Viewshed	4,571	4,571	4,571	4,571	4,571		4,571	
Modified Landscape	3,376	3,376	3,376	3,376	3,376		3,376	
Timber Production	469	469	469	469	469		469	
TOTAL	14,825	14,825	14,825	14,825	14,825	14,825	14,825	14,825
Suitable Timber Lands	1,709	1,709	1,709	1,709	1,709	0	1,709	0