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INDIVIDUAL ROADLESS AREA DESCRIPTION

ROADLESS AREA NAME: Bay of Pillars (244)

ACRES (NFS): 28,728

BIOGEOGRAPHIC PROVINCE: Kuiu Island

ECOLOGICAL SECTION: Kuiu-Prince of Wales Fjordlands

2003 WILDERNESS ATTRIBUTE RATING: 25

I. Overview and Description

(1) **Location and Access:** The Bay of Pillars Roadless Area is located on the west side of Kuiu Island bordering Chatham Strait, approximately 40 air miles from Petersburg and 20 air miles from Kake. The Tebenkof Bay Wilderness lies to the south. Petersburg and Kake are served by the Alaska Marine Highway and Petersburg has daily jet service. The roadless area is accessed primarily by boat or float plane on saltwater from Chatham Strait, by the portage trail from Port Camden, or by the road from Rowan Bay. Anchorages are available at several points in both the outer and inner parts of Bay of Pillars, and both the inner and outer bays have accessible shorelines suitable for landing small craft. There are no sites suitable for landing wheeled aircraft. There is no ferry service to Kuiu Island. Access to the interior is by foot or helicopter.

(2) **History:** The Bay of Pillars area is part of the traditional territory of the Kake Tlingit. Evidence of past use include the remains of village sites, gardens, a fort, a fish trap, camps, and culturally modified trees. Traditional knowledge indicates that a portage trail existed between the heads of Bay of Pillars and Port Camden. A cannery operated at the Bay of Pillars from about 1930 to 1950, and employed Alaska Native people from Kake and Port Camden. Several fur farms were located on the islands during the 1940s, all of which are abandoned, as is the cannery. Other historic sites include a salmon hatchery and saltery in the inner bay, cabins, and temporary camps. The hatchery and saltery were on the bank of Kutlaku Creek and operated in 1892. Evidence of beach logging is found in the inner bay. A logging camp was developed at nearby Rowan Bay in about 1973 and is still used during periods of timber harvest. Forest Road 6402, which is the north boundary of the area, was constructed to haul logs to Rowan Bay.

(3) **Geography and Topography:** The Bay of Pillars Roadless Area encompasses two distinct geophysical areas, including the Rowan Sedimentary Hills west of Kutlaku Creek and the Kuiu Plutonic Province east of Kutlaku Creek. The landscape of the Rowan Sedimentary Hills geophysical area is characterized by long, smooth, forested hill slopes bisected by broad, U-shaped glacial valleys underlain by thick glacial till deposits. Bedrock lithology consists primarily of mudstone, greywacke, and turbidites of the Bay of Pillars formation. Bedrock generally weathers to a silty or loamy texture, with a high percentage of sharp, angular rock fragments. These rocks are Silurian in age (400 to 440 million years old). The Kuiu Plutonic Mountains geophysical area consists of all of the major mountains on Kuiu Island. Landforms are typically smooth mountain slopes below relatively extensive areas of rounded alpine ecosystems. Mountain slopes are generally steep, frequently dissected, and shallowly incised. Bedrock lithology consists of plutonic rocks of the Kuiu-Etolin plutonic belt of Miocene age (20 to 22 million years ago) and older plutons of the Chilkat-Prince of Wales plutonic province of Cretaceous age (about 100 million years ago). Rock types are primarily massive, non-foliated intrusive igneous rocks, and are mostly granite, granodiorite, quartz diorite, and quartz monzodiorite.

The roadless area is characterized by a large, open bay with numerous small islands, and a large inner bay connected to the outer bay by a narrow, rocky, but navigable channel. The outer bay is subject to occasional strong wave action. Kutlaku Lake is a major feature accessed from the south arm of the inner bay. The inner and outer bays are surrounded by peaks and ridges which average about 1,800 feet; some peaks reach over 3,000 feet. Vegetation is predominantly spruce-hemlock forest below alpine. Muskeg communities are infrequent and found primarily on the lower slopes and in valley bottoms. The area contains 64 miles of shoreline along saltwater. This roadless area

contains 797 acres of islands and islets (two island are over 150 acres), 178 acres of lakes, 1,228 acres of alpine, and 1,205 acres of rock. There are no mapped ice or snow features. Stream density varies from a high of 4.1 miles/1,000 acres in the Kuiu Plutonic Mountains to 3.7 miles/1,000 acres in the Rowan Sedimentary Hills. The eastern portion of the area contains a high percentage of high gradient contained streams with sandy substrates derived from granitic soil material. The western portion of the area is typified by relatively large watersheds with main channels flowing through broad glacial valleys.

(4) Ecosystem:

(a) Classification: Biogeographic Province. The roadless area is in the Kuiu Island Biogeographic Province. This province is generally characterized by rolling, subdued topography and extensive muskeg areas, but may have localized, rugged terrain. There are no known areas of unique or uncommon plant/soils associations or geologic formations in the area.

Ecological Section/Subsection. The Bay of Pillars Roadless Area is contained entirely within the Kuiu-Prince of Wales Fjordlands Ecological Section (M247F), represented by two ecological subsections (see table below). The Rowan Sediments Ecological Subsection covers about two-thirds of the Bay of Pillars Roadless Area. Glacially smoothed hills and broad valleys carved from sedimentary rock on northcentral Kuiu Island support highly productive hemlock or hemlock-spruce forests. Valley bottoms contain a variety of wetlands that have developed in poorly drained organic soils. The Kuiu-Prince of Wales Granitics Ecological Subsection covers the remaining third and is typified by rugged mountaintops of igneous rock which rise above rounded peaks. The higher crests capture incoming precipitation which remains as snowpack much of the year. Moderately productive hemlock forests are found below the alpine zone (Nowacki et al., 2001).

Ecological Section	Ecological Subsection	Percent of Roadless Area
Kuiu-Prince of Wales Fjordlands	Rowan Sediments	63%
	Kuiu-Prince of Wales Granitics	37%

(b) Soils: Bedrock types are non-calcareous sedimentary rocks, such as mudstone, sandstones and graywackes, or intrusive igneous rocks, such as granite, granodiorite, quartz diorite, and quartz monzodiorite. Bedrock generally weathers to silty or loamy texture soils. The western portion of this geographic area, the Rowan Sedimentary Hills, comprises one of the most productive forest areas on Kuiu Island.

Soils in this area are formed in a wide variety of parent material, including bedrock, colluvium, 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 vacidic, 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, such as broad glacial valleys underlain by glacial till. These soils have deep accumulations of organic matter and range from scrubby forested wetlands to open muskeg. Alpine soils, generally above 2,000 feet elevation, are mostly shallow, very wet organic soils or are extremely shallow and rocky. Large alluvial fans on mountain toe slopes are characteristic of the Kuiu Plutonic Mountains.

(c) Vegetation: The area is heavily covered by spruce and hemlock to an elevation of 2,000 feet. Alpine vegetation (mapped as 1,228 acres) dominates areas above 2,000 feet. Nearly all of the alpine ecosystems on Kuiu Island occur in the Kuiu Plutonic Mountains geophysical area at elevations of about 2,000 to 3,350 feet. Brush communities dominated by Sitka alder and salmonberry occur in narrow snow avalanche tracks that run from alpine areas to near sea level. Mountain hemlock plant communities dominate the upper mountain slopes immediately below the subalpine zone. Nearly all of the well-drained hill slope positions in the Rowan Sedimentary Hills area are occupied by the highly productive western hemlock/blueberry/shield fern plant associations. This plant community forms rather large, contiguous

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forest areas. Sitka spruce communities and western hemlock/devils club communities occur on large alluvial fans. There is relatively little interspersed muskeg on lower slopes and in broad glacial valleys. Muskegs mapped as approximately 100 acres are difficult to estimate due to their small size and association with forested sites.

There are approximately 24,546 acres mapped as forestland, of which 20,364 acres or 83 percent are mapped as productive old-growth forest. Of the productive old growth, 13,839 acres or 68 percent are mapped as high-volume old-growth forest. The productive old growth includes about 1,422 acres of high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. There are 197 acres of second-growth forest where beach timber harvest has occurred in the past.

(d) Fish Resources: There are five ADF&G numbered salmon-producing streams within the roadless area. The most important are Kutlaku and Kwatahein Creeks. The area supports pink, chum, coho, and sockeye salmon, as well as steelhead and cutthroat trout, and Dolly Varden char.

(e) Wildlife Resources: The Bay of Pillars area is high value habitat for black bear, deer, wolves, furbearers, and land birds. This area has been identified as an important wintering area and migration resting area for waterfowl. A large black bear population on Kuiu Island attracts numerous hunters to this area. Other terrestrial mammals include bats, red squirrel, mice, shrews, and voles. There are occasional sightings of fisher and wolverine, but these are considered incidental species at the edge of their range.

Bird species include bald eagles, red-tailed hawks, sharp-shinned hawks, great horned owls, western screech owls, saw-whet owls, pigmy owls, marbled murrelets, osprey, spruce grouse, ptarmigan, sandhill cranes, trumpeter swans, Canada geese, and great blue herons. Red-throated, Pacific, and common loons all occur around Kuiu 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.

Sea mammals known to inhabit the waters surrounding Kuiu Island are the Pacific white-sided dolphin, killer whale, harbor porpoise, Dall's porpoise, humpback whale, Steller sea lion, and harbor seal. Sea otters occur on both eastern and western shores of Kuiu Island.

Amphibians known to occur on Kuiu Island include rough-skinned newt, western toad, and wood frog. 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. Wood frogs are found in most of the ecosystems found in Southeast Alaska except for marine, estuarine, and riverine.

(5) Management Direction and Current Uses: The roadless area was allocated to five Land Use Designations (LUDs) under the 1997 Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan. These five LUDs are Timber Production, Remote Recreation, Semi-remote Recreation, Old-growth Habitat, and Wild River.

LUD	Acres
Timber Production	946
Remote Recreation	20,024
Semi-remote Recreation	4,144
Old-growth Habitat	2,742
Wild River	872

Approximately 3 percent of the roadless area was allocated to one development LUD, Timber Production. The Timber Production LUD is located primarily in the southeast corner of the roadless area.

The majority of land in this area, approximately 97 percent of the roadless area, was allocated to LUDs that do not allow development. Approximately 70 percent of the roadless area was allocated to the Remote Recreation LUD. Approximately 14 percent of the roadless area was allocated to the Semi-remote Recreation LUD, mostly in and around the Bay of Pillars. Small associated islands off the coast were also allocated to the Semi-remote Recreation LUD. Near Rowan Bay and Port Camden, approximately 10 percent of the roadless area was allocated to the Old-growth Habitat LUD. In the Kutlaku Creek and Lake area, approximately 3 percent of the roadless area (2 river miles) were allocated to the Wild River LUD.

Few Forest Service management activities have occurred in the area. The outer bay is frequently used as an anchorage by commercial fishermen. Recreation uses include bear hunting, sockeye salmon fishing, steelhead fishing, sea kayaking, and camping. Boating and sport fishing are popular. A sport fishing charter operation anchors for the summer in the bay. The Bay of Pillars public use shelter is located on the south side of the outer bay. There were eight outfitter/guide permits issued in 2000 for 151 service days of use. The Bay of Pillars Portage Trail connects the inner bay with Port Camden. This one-mile canoe/kayak route receives moderate recreational use, which has been steadily increasing since its establishment in the 1980s. The area, especially Kutlaku Creek, is used for subsistence by Kake residents and other subsistence users. A fishpass (Alaska steppass) was installed on Kwatahein Creek and is easily accessible from the shore. The fishpass will require periodic maintenance. A Forest Service electronics site is located approximately 3 miles south of Port Camden.

(6) Appearance (Apparent Naturalness): The area appears unmodified except for the remains of an abandoned cannery on the south side of the outer Bay of Pillars, just outside of the roadless area boundary. The topography of the area tends to minimize views of modified areas outside the roadless area. Most of the area is not visible from present ferry and cruise ship routes.

(7) Surroundings (External Influences): This roadless area is surrounded mostly by National Forest System land and the Bay of Pillars. State land is adjacent to the area in Rowan Bay. The Tebenkof Bay and Kuiu Wildernesses lie to the south. The region north of the Bay of Pillars area is heavily modified by timber management activities centered around Rowan Bay. Forest Road 6402 (the Isthmus Road), extending southeast from Rowan Bay, skirts the north side of the inner bay. Traffic noise is apparent in the bay when the road is in use. Visually, however, the road is mostly screened. Other modifications on lands to the north are unlikely under current management direction because the area is in an old-growth habitat reserve. Chatham Strait, an important marine travel route, lies west of the roadless area.

(8) Attractions and Features of Special Interest: The area contains eight inventoried recreation places, which cover 749 acres, or 3 percent of the roadless area. These recreation places include Kutlaku Lake, the cannery site, and the inner bay. Fishing on Kutlaku Creek is an important attraction for recreationists. Two miles of the creek meet the criteria for Wild River classification under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, and it was recommended for Wild River classification in the 1997 Forest Plan ROD. The presence of good anchorage sites attracts boating use to the bay. A canoe/kayak portage trail connects the inner Bay of Pillars to Port Camden on the east coast of Kuiu Island. Rocky pillar formations can be found in the bay. The tidal rip between the inner and outer bay is noted for producing whitewater wave action, which is a thrill for canoeists and kayakers.

(9) Differences between the 1989 and 2003 Roadless Area Boundary: Developments along the northern edge of the roadless area have reduced its size. An area at the head of Kutlaku Bay that has been beached logged, but not roaded, has been added to the roadless area. Several small areas have been excluded along the developed boundaries between the Draft and Final SEIS to improve manageability in those areas.

II. Capability for Management as Wilderness

(1) Natural Integrity and Apparent Naturalness: The area is essentially unmodified. The Bay of Pillars public use shelter is of rustic design, made of logs and hand split shakes. Evidence of old structures include several abandoned fur farms on islands in the outer bay, a cannery site near the mouth of Kutlaku Creek and a cannery site at Kwatahein Creek. The road on the north side of the inner bay has also affected the area's natural integrity.

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Overall, the area is suitable for wilderness classification. All or part of the area could be added to the adjacent Tebenkof Bay Wilderness.

(2) Opportunity for Solitude and Serenity, Self-reliance, Adventure, Challenging Experiences, and Primitive Recreation: There is a high opportunity for solitude and primitive recreation within the area. At times, use of floatplanes and powerboats may disrupt visitors for brief periods. Noise from logging trucks on the adjacent road is audible during periods of harvest activity. Present recreation use levels are moderate. In general, a person camped in the outer bay is likely to see others during the summer months. The enclosed character of the bays in the area generally allows the visitor to feel remote from the sights and sounds of human activity.

Access by boat into the area requires extended boating time in exposed waters, and entering the inner bay requires boating skill and may present great risk. 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 recreation opportunities primarily in a roaded setting. 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)	12,513	44%
Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized (SPNM)	1,683	6%
Semi-Primitive Motorized (SPM)	12,585	44%
Roaded Natural (RN)	16	0%
Roaded Modified (RM)	1,931	7%

The area contains eight inventoried recreation places, which cover 749 acres, or 3 percent of the roadless area.

ROS Class	# of Rec. Places	Total Acres
P	1	141
SPNM	0	0
SPM	4	502
RN	1	16
RM	2	90

The only developed recreation facility is the Bay of Pillars shelter.

(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 Bay of Pillars Roadless Area was given a rating of 25 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 also given a rating of 25.

(4) Ecologic and Geologic Values: There are no known areas of unique or uncommon plant/soils associations in the area. The roadless area could be added to the Tebenkof Bay and Kuiu Wildernesses, which lie to the south and, possibly, to other roadless areas on the island. This would create a larger wilderness.

(a) Fish Resources: VCU 402, 403, and 420 are rated as a primary salmon producers around Rowan Bay, Bay of Pillars, and Port Camden, respectively, by the Tongass Fish and Wildlife Resource Assessment. No VCUs were rated as primary sport fish producers (ADF&G, 1998).

There are five ADF&G numbered salmon producing streams within the area, producing sockeye, pink, chum, and coho salmon; steelhead and cutthroat trout; and Dolly Varden char. The most important streams are Kutlaku and Kwatahein Creeks. Kutlaku has an annual estimated peak escapement of 1,300 sockeye, 12,000 pink, and 650 chum. Kutlaku Creek has high commercial and historic values for sockeye salmon. Historically, a hatchery and saltery were located near the stream. Both the stream and the lake have high quality spawning and rearing habitat for sockeye and very good coho salmon smolt capability.

Kwatahein Creek has an estimated annual peak escapement of 53,000 pink, 3,500 coho, and good runs of steelhead. Subsistence fishermen, mostly from Kake, harvest sockeye at the mouth of Kutlaku, and sport anglers are beginning to fish steelhead in Kwatahein. An "Alaska steppass" fish ladder was constructed in 1989 at Kwatahein Creek to make the upper watershed accessible to pink and chum salmon.

(b) Wildlife Resources: The Bay of Pillars Roadless Area has high value habitat for black bear, Sitka black-tailed deer, wolves, furbearers, land birds, and waterfowl. A large black bear population on Kuiu Island attracts hunters to this area. Based on data compiled from 1985 to 1994, VCUs 403 and 420 near Rowan Bay and Bay of Pillars are listed among the top 25 percent of VCUs for black bear harvest (ADF&G, 1998). This area has also been identified as an important wintering area and migration resting area for waterfowl. Sea otters occur in both eastern and western waters off Kuiu Island.

The roaded area to the northeast has been identified as an important "pinchpoint" for land migration between north and south parts of Kuiu Island. This area, although roaded, does not receive much traffic since it does not connect to any community. The proposed log transfer facility on Threemile Arm could further reduce the use of this road.

(c) Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species: The only federally listed threatened or endangered species likely to occur within or adjacent to the roadless area are the humpback whale (endangered) and the Steller sea lion (threatened). Both of these species are found in adjacent marine waters. Three Forest Service Region 10 Sensitive Species are suspected or known to occur within the area, including the trumpeter swan, Peale's peregrine falcon, and the Queen Charlotte goshawk. Trumpeter swans nest in the lowlands on small lakes and along large rivers, and winter in ice-free areas throughout the Tongass. Peale's peregrine falcons nest on cliff faces and islands and feed primarily on seabirds. Inhabitants of late seral forests, Queen Charlotte goshawks are closely associated with productive old growth. There are ten known northern goshawk nesting locations on Kuiu Island; two in the Bay of Pillars area. In addition, 12 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. There are no known unique geologic features.

(5) Scientific and Educational Values: The abandoned cannery site on private land attracts some visitors. Sockeye salmon spawning in Kutlaku Lake are a seasonal ecologic feature. The enclosed setting of the bay and the rocky pillar formations are also attractions. The area offers opportunities to study forests, fish, wildlife, and geologic processes.

(6) Scenic Values: The area appears unmodified except for the remains of an abandoned cannery on private land on the south side of the outer Bay of Pillars, just outside of the roadless area boundary. Two harvest units outside the area are visible from portions of the surface of the inner Bay of Pillars. To the west, the steep-sided bay frames views of islands and trees in the foreground, with Baranof Island's snowcapped peaks in the background.

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When at Kutlaku Lake and other locations in the area, the enclosed nature tends to minimize views of modified areas outside the roadless area. The Bay of Pillars Roadless Area is not visible from present ferry and cruise ship routes.

Visual Priority Routes and Use Areas identified by the Forest Plan that are within or adjacent to the area include Bay of Pillars, a saltwater use area and boat anchorage; Kutlaku Lake, a dispersed recreation area; the Rowan Bay community; Kuiu Island Canoe and Kayak Portages; and Kutlaku Creek and Lake, a recommended Wild, Scenic and Recreational River.

Thirty-eight percent of this roadless area is inventoried as Variety Class A (possessing landscape diversity that is unique for the character type). Thirty-seven percent is also inventoried Variety Class B (possessing landscape diversity that is common for the character type). Approximately 24 percent is inventoried Variety Class C (possessing a low degree of landscape diversity).

The majority of this roadless area, approximately 95 percent, is in Existing Visual Condition (EVC) Type I, where only ecological change has occurred. Approximately 1 percent is in EVC Type II, where the area appears to be untouched by human activity. About 1 percent of the area is in EVC Type IV, where changes in the landscape are easily noticed by the average person and may attract some attention. Three percent is in EVC Type V, where changes in the landscape are obvious to the average person, and appear to be major disturbances.

(7) Social, Cultural, and Historical Values: The Bay of Pillars area is in the traditional territory of the Kake Tlingit. Evidence of past use includes the remains of villages, gardens, a fort, a fish trap, camps, and culturally modified trees. Traditional knowledge indicates a portage trail existed between the heads of Bay of Pillars and Port Camden. A cannery operated at the Bay of Pillars from about 1930 to 1950, and employed Native people from Kake and Port Camden. Several fur farms were located on the islands during the 1940s, all of which are abandoned, as is the cannery. Other historic period sites include a salmon hatchery and saltery, cabins, and camps. Evidence of beach logging is found in the inner bay. A logging camp was developed at nearby Rowan Bay in about 1973 and is still used during periods of timber harvest. Forest Road 6402, which is the north boundary of the area, was constructed in 1980 to haul logs to Rowan Bay. The area receives some subsistence use, mostly by residents of Kake, who target the sockeye salmon run at Kutlaku Creek. VCU 420, which covers the eastern portion of the roadless area, was listed with the highest value community use areas. No VCUs were listed among the VCUs with the highest sensitivity to disturbance of subsistence use areas (ADF&G, 1998).

(8) Manageability as Wilderness and Boundary Conditions/Changes: The area is relatively enclosed by topographic divides. Feasibility of management as wilderness or in a roadless condition is high. Forest Road 6402 comes to within a few hundred feet of the inner bay and has reduced the manageability of that area as a primitive setting. The road also isolates the area on the north side of Bay of Pillars from the remainder of the roadless area. Development of private land on the cannery site could influence future management. All or part of the area could be added to the Tebenkof Bay and Kuiu Wildernesses to the south. The drainages that are affected by the road system in the northeast corner of the roadless area could be excluded and this would increase the manageability of the overall area. Management as a wilderness or in an unroaded condition would be consistent with Wild River LUD management for Kutlaku Creek and Kutlaku Lake.

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

(1) Recreation, Including Tourism Potential: Tourism has been increasing in Southeast Alaska and is expected to continue to increase. While the roadless area is not easily accessed from Kake, the closest stop on the Alaskan Marine Highway, some increase in tourism is expected. A potential trail corridor exists from saltwater to Kutlaku Lake. Potential sites exist at Kutlaku Creek for one or more recreation cabins or shelters. There is potential for additional outfitter and guide permits. A potential shelter location has been identified for kayakers traveling between this area and the Tebenkof Bay Wilderness through the open waters of Chatham Strait. If a boat launch were constructed in Rowan Bay, it would open up the potential for access directly into the inner bay from existing roads. This would open up other recreation opportunities both for individuals and for outfitter/guides.

(2) Subsistence Uses: Management as a wilderness would not conflict with current subsistence uses.

- (3) **Fish Resources:** Kutlaku Lake has been identified as having potential for fertilization to increase sockeye salmon production. Currently, there is no fish habitat enhancement projects planned.
- (4) **Wildlife Resources:** There are no wildlife habitat improvement projects planned in the area.
- (5) **Timber Resources:** There are approximately 20,364 acres mapped as productive old growth in the roadless area. Approximately 197 acres are second growth. Of this area, 51,833 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), less than 10 acres or less than 1 percent of this roadless area are estimated to be suitable for timber production and are mapped as high-volume old growth. Of these suitable acres, none are mapped as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. There are no plans for timber harvest within the roadless area.
- (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 inventoried areas with high mineral development potential in this roadless area.
- (8) **Transportation and Utilities:** There are no potential transportation or utility corridors in the roadless area. The only road that might be needed for timber harvest would be in the southeast portion of the roadless area.
- (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 contains no Research Natural Areas, and has not been identified for any other scientific value.
- (11) **Land Use Authorizations:** The Federal Aviation Administration is authorized to maintain communication facilities at a site approximately 2 miles south of Port Camden.

Forest Service records show that 8 outfitter/guides used this area in 2000 for 11 service days for freshwater fishing, 24 service days for camping, 78 service days for remote setting nature tours, and 38 service days for black bear hunting.

- (12) **Land Status:** The roadless area is entirely National Forest System land. Encumbered land within the roadless area are located north of Kutlaku Lake. There are approximately 23 acres of private land adjacent to the roadless area.

IV. Wilderness Evaluation (Need for Wilderness)

(1) Public and Congressional Interest:

- (a) **Interest Expressed by Local Users and Residents:** There is strong interest on the part of inhabitants of some local communities to retain the roadless character of unroaded parts of Kuiu Island.
- (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. The bill did not include this roadless area. In 2001, HR 2908 proposed that most of the roadless area be designated as part of the Tebenkof Bay Wilderness and Kuiu Wilderness.
- (c) **Public Input During Forest Plan Revision and Appeals:** The Kake Tribal Corporation recommended that all of north Kuiu bays and inlets, especially Bay of Pillars, be protected from timber harvest. They felt that the Bay of Pillars should be managed as an Old-growth Habitat LUD or LUD II to protect fish, wildlife, scenic and recreation values. Timber industry organizations recommended that the area be managed as Timber Production LUD. They felt that there was no justification for other classifications and that continued development would extend the life of the logging camp at Rowan Bay.

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The Narrows Conservation Coalition, Southeast Alaska Conservation Council, and the Point Baker Community Council recommended that all of north Kuiu be managed for primitive recreation. The Rainforest Campaign and others stated that the area should be LUD II or wilderness. The Wrangell Resource Council and the City of Port Alexander supported preserving the area to protect wildlife habitat, old growth, and scenic and recreation values.

(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, while others wanted the current level of development to continue.

(e) Public Input Expressed for Project-level EISs and Other Input: No comments are available.

(f) Public Input Expressed During Supplemental EIS Process: The U.S. Department of the Interior identified this roadless area as one of the 13 roadless areas they considered to have outstanding fish and wildlife values. They indicated that among the remaining, undeveloped areas left on Kuiu Island, three areas offer outstanding fish and wildlife habitat that should be protected. These include Bay of Pillars, Camden, and East Kuiu. Protection of this area, particularly in combination with the East Kuiu (#245) and Tebenkof Bay Wilderness Area, would conserve valuable remaining undisturbed, forested habitats on the island. They expressed that the important wildlife values provided by this area warrant management that ensures the long-term integrity of its habitats, ecosystem processes, and ecological functions.

The city of Petersburg said they were opposed to designation of this area as wilderness because of the potential long-term economic effects on the city.

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.

The City of Kupreanof recommended the Bay of Pillars for permanent protection as wilderness.

The Alaska Rainforest Campaign (a coalition of national and Alaska conservation groups) identified Roadless Areas 244, 245, and 246 as adjacent to the existing Tebenkof Bay Wilderness and Kuiu Wilderness and recommended them for permanent protection as wilderness. They indicated that this combination would create a contiguous wilderness area of approximately 265,000 acres. SEACC recommended that the Bay of Pillars, East Kuiu, and South Kuiu roadless areas be designated wilderness and added to the existing Tebenkof Bay and Kuiu Wilderness. This combination would create a contiguous wilderness of approximately 265,000 acres.

(2) Nearby Roadless and Wilderness Areas and Uses: The Tebenkof Bay Wilderness is adjacent to the southern boundary of the Bay of Pillars Roadless Area, and the Kuiu Wilderness is immediately south of the Tebenkof Bay Wilderness. The East Kuiu Roadless Area borders the Bay of Pillars Roadless Area to the east. The Camden Roadless Area is just across Forest Road 6402 to the north. South Baranof Wilderness is across Chatham Strait about 10 miles to the west.

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

Community	Air Miles	Water Miles
Juneau (Pop. 30,711)	115	130
Petersburg (Pop. 3,224)	40	95
Wrangell (Pop. 2,308)	65	65
Ketchikan (Pop. 14,070)	125	135

Kake (approximately 20 air miles to the northeast), Petersburg, and Wrangell are the nearest stops on the Alaska Marine Highway.

(4) Relative Contribution to the National Wilderness Preservation System: The Bay of Pillars Roadless Area is located on the west side of Kuiu Island bordering Chatham Strait. The Tebenkof Bay Wilderness lies to the south. The Bay of Pillars area is characterized by a large, open bay with numerous small islands, and a large inner bay connected to the outer bay by a narrow, rocky, but navigable channel. The inner and outer bays are surrounded by peaks and ridges, which average about 1,800 feet; some peaks reach over 3,000 feet. The outer bay is subject to occasional strong wave action. Kutlaku Lake is a major feature accessed from the south arm of the inner bay.

The area is mostly unmodified; however, it is influenced to some degree by developed lands along its northeast borders. The natural integrity and apparent naturalness is very high. The opportunity for solitude is very high and the opportunity for primitive recreation is outstanding.

Approximately 38 percent of the landscape is considered distinctive for the character type from a scenery standpoint. The area has very high cultural and historic values. The Kutlaku Creek and Lake are recommended for Wild River designation under the Forest Plan Revision.

The roadless area includes about 13,839 acres of high-volume, old-growth forest. Of these acres, 1,422 are mapped as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth.

The Bay of Pillars Roadless Area is classified as being in the Kuiu Island Biogeographic Province and makes about 6 percent of the province. It is one of eight inventoried roadless areas found within the province that collectively make up about 53 percent of the province. The Tebenkof Bay and the Kuiu Wildernesses are located in this province and make up about 26 percent of the province. The province also includes the Sumner, Conclusion, and associated islands LUD II area, which make up about 1 percent of the province.

The Bay of Pillars Roadless Area lies completely within the Kuiu-Prince of Wales Fjordlands Ecological Section and represents 3 percent of the ecological section. Approximately 13 percent of the Kuiu-Prince of Wales Fjordlands Ecological Section is in existing wilderness, 8 percent is in existing LUD II, and an additional 33 percent is protected by other existing non-development LUDs.

The majority (63 percent) of the roadless area is in the Rowan Sediments Ecological Subsection; this portion of the roadless area represents 14 percent of the entire ecological subsection, 27 percent of which is in existing wilderness and 27 percent is protected by existing non-development LUDs. The remaining 37 percent of the roadless area is in the Kuiu-Prince of Wales Granitics Ecological Subsection; this portion of the roadless area represents 7 percent of the entire ecological subsection, 19 percent of which is protected in existing wilderness, 23 percent in existing LUD II, and 36 percent by existing non-development LUDs.

The Bay of Pillars Roadless Area was rated 25 out of a possible 28 points under the WARS. As such, its WARS rating is ranked 12th from the highest (along with 12 other roadless areas) among the 109 Tongass inventoried roadless areas.

There is strong local support for managing the area in an unroaded condition, and there is also both local and national support for designating this area as wilderness. Designation would create a wilderness with high cultural, historic, old growth, and ecologic values, and would expand the Tebenkof Bay and Kuiu Wildernesses to the north. Overall, the factors identified here indicate that the relative contribution of this area to the National Wilderness Preservation System would be high to very high.

Appendix C

V. Environmental Consequences

The Bay of Pillars Roadless Area would be managed under the existing Forest Plan if Alternative 1 or 2 is implemented. Approximately 97 percent of the roadless area would be managed under non-development LUDs. Timber harvest and road development could occur in the remaining 3 percent. The land in the development LUDs provides an estimated 3 acres that are suitable for timber production (less than 1 percent of the suitable acres on the Petersburg Ranger District). None of the suitable acres are identified as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. The timber sales, recreation, minerals, and special use programs would continue. The values associated with the natural settings of the roadless area, including the cultural, historic, old growth, and scenic values are mostly protected under the Forest Plan.

Under Alternative 3, a 23,281-acre portion of the area in Remote Recreation, Old-growth Habitat, Semi-remote Recreation, Wild/Scenic/Recreation River, and Timber Production LUDs would be converted to Recommended Wilderness. No timber harvest would be allowed and the recreation, minerals, and special use programs could be restricted within the Recommended Wilderness area. There would be no land in the roadless area identified as suitable for timber harvest. 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 majority of the roadless area, including cultural, historic, old growth, and scenic values, would be provided long-term protection if designated wilderness.

Under Alternative 4, a 20,926-acre portion of the Remote Recreation, Old-growth Habitat, and Semi-remote Recreation, and Wild/Scenic/Recreation River LUDs would be converted to Recommended Wilderness. This would not affect timber sale projects because this area is currently allocated to non-development LUDs. The total area suitable for timber production would not change from Alternative 1. The recreation, minerals, and special use programs could be restricted within the Recommended Wilderness area. 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 majority of the roadless area, including cultural, historic, old growth, and scenic values, would be provided long-term protection if designated wilderness.

Under Alternative 5, a 20,852-acre portion of the area in Remote Recreation, Old-growth Habitat, Semi-remote Recreation, and Wild/Scenic/Recreation River LUDs would be converted to Recommended Wilderness. This would not affect timber sale projects because this area is currently allocated to non-development LUDs. The total area suitable for timber production would not change from Alternative 1. The recreation, minerals, and special use programs could be restricted in the Recommended Wilderness, area. Mineral prospecting would be allowed up to the time that the area is actually designated as wilderness by Congress. The values associated with the natural settings of the roadless area, including cultural, historic, old growth, and scenic values, would be provided long-term protection if designated wilderness.

Under Alternative 6, 7, or 8, the roadless area would be converted to Recommended Wilderness. No timber harvest would be allowed and the ongoing recreation, minerals, and special use 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, including cultural, historic, old growth, and scenic values, would be provided long-term protection if designated wilderness.

Appendix C

Land Use Designation Allocations and Suitable Timber Lands by Alternative for Roadless Area 244 (in acres)								
Land Use Designation	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7	Alt 8
Recommended Wilderness			23,281	20,926	20,852	28,719	28,728	28,728
Wilderness								
Recommended Wilderness Nat. Mon.								
Wilderness National Monument								
Non-wilderness National Monument								
Research Natural Area								
Special Interest Area								
Remote Recreation	20,024	20,024	2,252	2,263	2,323			
Enacted Municipal Watershed								
Old-growth Habitat	2,742	2,742	1,338	2,740	2,740			
Semi-remote Recreation	4,144	4,144	1,853	1,853	1,868			
Recommended LUD II							10	
LUD II								
Wild, Scenic, Recreational River	872	872						
Experimental Forest								
Scenic Viewshed								
Modified Landscape								
Timber Production	946	946	4	946	945			
TOTAL	28,728	28,728	28,728	28,728	28,728	28,728	28,728	28,728
Suitable Timber Lands	3	3	0	3	3	0	0	0