

Appendix C

INDIVIDUAL ROADLESS AREA DESCRIPTION

ROADLESS AREA NAME: North Kruzof (326)

ACRES (NFS): 25,373

BIOGEOGRAPHIC PROVINCE: West Baranof Island

ECOLOGICAL SECTION: Baranof-Chichagof Fjordlands

2003 WILDERNESS ATTRIBUTE RATING: 22

I. Overview and Description

(1) **Location and Access:** The area is located on the north end of Kruzof Island and includes Partofshikof Island, which is located immediately east of the area, as well as a number of smaller offshore islands and rocks. The area is generally bordered to the north by Salisbury Sound, to the west by the open Pacific Ocean, and to the south by developed areas that extend the width of the island from Gilmer Bay to Krestof Sound. Non-National Forest System lands border the area to the northwest. Neva Strait borders the area to the east. Sukoi Inlet separates the Kruzof Island portion of the area from Partofshikof Island.

Juneau is approximately 85 air miles northeast and Sitka is approximately 15 air miles southeast of the area. They are both serviced by the Alaska Marine Highway and have air service. The primary form of access to the area is by boat and sea plane on saltwater along all coastlines. Access to the area is generally good due to the numerous bays and fiords that provide sheltered anchorage for boats. There are no trails or public recreation cabins in the area. The 2.5-mile-long Sealion Cove Trail extends from Kalinin Bay to Sealion Cove through the area of non-National Forest System lands that borders the area to the northwest. This trail provides access to the edge of the area. This is also the case with the forest road that borders the Kruzof Island portion of the area to the south. Access into the interior is by foot or helicopter. There are no places suitable for landing wheeled airplanes.

(2) **History:** This area has a long and varied history of use dating from Tlingit use in prehistoric and historic times to the present use by a variety of Alaska residents and visitors. Use of the area has been primarily for hunting, fishing, recreation, and temporary occupancy. Remains of structures and other human cultural activity in varying degrees of deterioration can still be found. Goldschmidt and Haas (1946) identified a former smokehouse/cabin in this area.

(3) **Geography and Topography:** The area is generally characterized by small irregular mountains or ridges 1,000 to 2,000 feet in elevation with steep slopes. Numerous rocky crests and sharp ridges are found scattered throughout the area. The coastline is scalloped with bays and coves, and encompasses Sukoi Strait between Kruzof Island and Partofshikof Island. The shoreline is characterized by forested lowlands with a relatively gentle slope. Rocky islands, reefs, and rock bluffs dominate the coast along the north and west sides of the area. The rocky shoreline is interspersed with small gravel or sandy beaches. Partofshikof Island is characterized by two small mountains rising over 1,000 feet in elevation.

Streams are generally short and flow directly to saltwater. A dominant feature of the area is the rugged ridge that runs the width of Kruzof Island along the southern boundary of the area. With an elevation of 2,000 feet, it effectively separates the north portion of this roadless area from the rest of Kruzof Island.

This area includes 765 acres of alpine, 533 acres of rock, and no mapped ice or snow features. There are 98 miles of saltwater coastline and 8,543 acres of islands including Partofshikof Island.

(4) **Ecosystem:**

(a) **Classification:** Biogeographic Province. The area is classified as being in the West Baranof Island Biogeographic Province. Topographically, Baranof Island is the most rugged of all the islands in Southeast Alaska. The outer coast of this province is dotted with hundreds of small islands. All forest plant associations except those in the Western redcedar series and those found around large mainland rivers occur in this province.

Ecological Section/Subsection. The North Kruzof Roadless Area is contained entirely within the Baranof-Chichagof Fjordlands Ecological Section (M247B). This area is represented by one ecological subsection (see table below). The Sitka Sound Ecological Subsection is mostly covered in a blanket of ancient volcanic ash approximately 2 – 6 feet deep. Where the ash has been washed away, Sitka graywacke, granite, and low-grade metamorphic rocks are exposed. The Sitka Sound Complex Ecological Subsection is considerably lower in elevation relative to the surrounding subsections and there are no glaciers, although there are some permanent snowfields. Mixed conifer and hemlock-spruce forests dominate the lower elevations and shorelines, and forested wetlands of lodgepole pine and mixed conifer are abundant (Nowacki et al., 2001).

Ecological Section	Ecological Subsection	Percent of Roadless Area
Baranof-Chichagof Fjordlands	Sitka Sound Complex	100%

(b) **Soils:** Shallow mineral soils with good drainage can be found on steeper slopes due to rapid loss of material by erosion and efficient rainwater runoff. Deep, well drained soils commonly occur below the shallow soils on the gentler slopes where transported soil materials have collected. Poorly drained soils are found associated with low relief and impermeable subsurface layers. In locations with poor drainage, deep organic soils (muskegs) tend to form. In riparian areas, soil zones tend to contain sand and gravels as a result of flood deposition.

(c) **Vegetation:** The proximity of this area to the open North Pacific Ocean and the unimpeded movement of storms into the area from the southwest result in a high rainfall. Conifer cover density varies widely even on low slopes near saltwater, and is usually interspersed with muskeg and other lower forms of vegetation. Larger intertidal grass and associated meadows species are infrequent. The effects of wind and salt spray affect the character and, to some extent, the species on the west side of the area.

The vegetation of this roadless area consists primarily of typical spruce-hemlock forests. Western hemlock-Sitka spruce dominate the overstory while the understory is composed of shrubs such as red huckleberry, rusty menziesia, and devil's club. The forest floor is covered with a mat of mosses, liverworts, and plants such as deerheart, bunchberry dogwood, single delight, and skunk cabbage. Streamside riparian vegetation is characterized by salmonberry, devil's club, alder, grasses, ferns, and currants.

Muskegs are abundant within this area. The mapped acreage for muskegs is 1,346 acres; however, due to their small size and association with forested sites, accurate acreage estimates are difficult. These areas, dominated by sphagnum mosses, sedges, and shrubs of the heath family, are interspersed among low elevation timber stands where drainage is restricted. Trees within the muskegs are sparse and consist mainly of stunted hemlock, lodgepole pine, and Alaska cedar.

Small tide flats are found at the heads of Kalinin Bay and Sinitsin Cove, and are associated with stream estuaries. The tidflats generally support sea milkwort, glasswort, and algae. Beach meadows occur between the shore and the forest. Lower beach meadows are composed of belch ryegrass, reed bent grass, hairgrass, fescue grass, beach lovage, goose tongue, and sedges. Upper beach meadow plants include yarrow, bedstraw, starwort, ferns, western columbine, and coca parsnip. Oregon crabapple, alder, devil's club, and blueberry occur along the border of the beach meadow and the forest.

Appendix C

There are approximately 21,560 acres mapped as forest land, of which 12,519 acres or 58 percent are mapped as productive old-growth forest. Of the productive old growth, 4,673 acres or 37 percent are mapped as high-volume old-growth forest. The productive old growth includes about 371 acres of high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. There are 117 acres of second growth forest where beach harvest has occurred in the past.

(d) Fish Resources: The Anadromous Waters Catalogue and Atlas (ADF&G, 2000) shows eight unnamed fish-bearing streams in this roadless area, all but one on Kruzof Island. These streams drain into Kalinin Bay, Sinitzin Cove, Sukoi Inlet, and Sealion Cove. Most of these streams provide habitat for coho, pink, and chum salmon and Dolly Varden char. The stream draining into Sealion Cove also provides habitat for sockeye salmon.

(e) Wildlife Resources: There are many varied wildlife resources in this roadless area. Bird and waterfowl rearing and nesting areas are abundant in this area. Generally, the area provides good habitat for deer, brown bear, and furbearers such as marten and mink. Bald eagle habitat, including nesting and roosting trees is found along the shorelines of this roadless area. MacDonald and Cook (1999) do not list black bear, wolves, moose, or mountain goats as inhabiting this area.

(5) Management Direction and Current Uses: This area was allocated to three different Land Use Designations (LUDs) in the 1997 Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan. These three LUDs are Timber Production, Semi-Remote Recreation, and Old-growth Habitat.

LUD	Acres
Timber Production	7,348
Semi-Remote Recreation	9,786
Old-growth Habitat	8,239

Approximately 29 percent of this area was allocated to one development LUD, Timber Production. The Timber Production LUD is located in the south and west part of the roadless area on Kruzof Island.

The remaining 71 percent of this area was allocated to non-development LUDs (Semi-Remote Recreation and Old-growth Habitat). All of Partofshikof Island and the area along the west shore of Sukoi Inlet were allocated to the Semi-Remote Recreation LUD, which accounts for approximately 39 percent of the roadless area. The small islands in the vicinity of the area are also allocated to the Semi-Remote Recreation LUD. Approximately 32 percent of the Kruzof Roadless Area was allocated to the Old-growth Habitat LUD. This LUD is located in the northern half of the roadless area on Kruzof Island.

There are a number of authorized special uses existing within the area. Sitka Sound Seafoods has a special use permit for use of facilities at Kalinin Bay in support of temporary fish buying scow. The Federal Aviation Agency has an interagency agreement for use of facilities on top of the ridge in the southern portion of the area as a radio site for air to ground communications between pilots of general aviation aircraft and personnel in Flight Service Stations. A Forest Service radio repeater site is located on the same ridge and is used for intra-agency radio communications. A shelter is located on the Neva Strait side of Partofshikof Island.

Recreational use of the area is primarily for hunting and fishing, and enjoying the scenery. This use is scattered across the area, with the usual concentrations near lakes, streams, and shorelines. The Tongass Fish and Wildlife Resource Assessment (ADF&G, 1998) identified the six VCUs wholly or partially located within the area as subsistence use areas with a high sensitivity to disturbance.

(6) Appearance (Apparent Naturalness): A vast majority of the area is considered unmodified, except for those areas (primarily located near the shoreline) with evidence of current or historic use. Some older beach logging has occurred in patches along the shorelines east and west of Sukoi Inlet. This roadless area appears to be unmodified from major travel routes and popular use areas.

(7) Surroundings (External Influences): The Kruzof Island portion of the area is bordered by saltwater on three sides. As a result, external influences on those sides are limited to the sights and sounds of motorized boats.

The area is bordered to the northwest by the Sealion Cove Trail, which extends from Kalinin Bay to Sealion Cove through an area of non-National Forest System lands. An area developed in support of timber management forms the southern boundary of this roadless area. This development has only local effects on the roadless area because it is screened from the majority of the area by a ridge of mountains that extend along the south end of the roadless area. The Partofshikof Island portion of the area is entirely surrounded by saltwater, with external effects mainly limited to those associated with motorized boats. Alaska Marine Highway system ferries and other ships, boats, and floatplanes can be observed or heard along Neva Strait, which is a major water transportation corridor. The sight and sound of airplanes overhead also exerts an external influence on the area.

(8) Attractions and Features of Special Interest: The area contains 11 inventoried recreation places, which cover 25,271 acres, or almost 100 percent of the roadless area. The natural features of the area, the scenery, and the opportunity to see wildlife are all considered attractions. High quality fishing opportunities in the streams and lakes also provide attractions. There are no National Forest System trails. There is a public recreation shelter on Partofshikof Island in this roadless area.

(9) Differences Between the 1989 and 2003 Roadless Area Boundary: The boundary has primarily been changed by dropping the peninsula that contains Surprise Lake because of changes in land ownership and isolation of some National Forest System lands.

II. Capability for Management as Wilderness

(1) Natural Integrity and Apparent Naturalness: The area is unmodified except for the evidence of current and historic use of the area. Timber harvest has occurred in patches along the shorelines east and west of Sukoi Inlet. This activity, although locally evident, has a very low overall effect on the natural integrity and apparent naturalness of the area. Both the relative size of the developments and their location along the shoreline contribute to that low impact. The long-term ecological processes are intact and operating, with the effect of human influences on natural processes unmeasurable. The area's appearance is generally suitable for wilderness classification.

(2) Opportunity for Solitude and Serenity, Self-reliance, Adventure, Challenging Experiences, and Primitive Recreation: There is a relatively high opportunity for solitude and primitive recreation within the area. Both the size of the area and the screening offered by the topography and vegetation increase these opportunities. Recreational use of the area is relatively limited and dispersed, so that encounters with other visitors are unlikely. The sight or sound of airplanes overhead and boats along the coastlines can occasionally intrude on a visitor's solitude. Neva Strait, which borders Partofshikof Island to the east, is a major water transportation corridor. Alaska Marine Highway system ferries and other ships, boats, and floatplanes traveling this corridor can be observed or heard from locations on Partofshikof Island.

The area provides a moderate to high opportunity for primitive recreation as a result of its size, topographic and vegetative screening, diversity of primitive recreational opportunities, and physical challenges. This area has a highly irregular topography and diverse vegetation that combine to offer a setting capable of providing a variety of primitive recreation opportunities. Lakes, ponds, streams, bays, rugged mountains, and a varied coastline all contribute to these opportunities. The absence of developed recreational facilities further enhances the opportunity for primitive recreation.

Outfitter/guide use was reported at three locations in and around this area in 1999. These locations were Kalinin Bay, Sinitsin Cove, and Sukoi Inlet. Twelve groups with a total of 59 clients were reported visiting the area. Reported uses included camping, brown bear hunting, and hiking.

The area provides primarily semi-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.

Appendix C

ROS Class	Acres	Percent of Total ROS
Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized (SPNM)	19,398	76%
Semi-Primitive Motorized (SPM)	3,754	15%
Roaded Natural (RN)	1,412	6%
Roaded Modified (RM)	765	3%

The area contains 11 inventoried recreation places, which cover 25,271 acres, or almost 100 percent of the roadless area.

ROS Class	# of Rec. Places*	Total Acres
SPNM	4	19,367
SPM	4	3,727
RN	3	1,412
RM	4	765

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

There are no National Forest System trails and one public recreation shelter in the area. The Sealion Cove Trail, which extends from Kalinin Bay to Sealion Cove, is located immediately northwest of the area.

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

In 1979, during the RARE II process, the Tongass National Forest applied WARS for the first time and rated each unroaded VCU on the Tongass. In 1989, the inventoried roadless areas (which generally include more than one VCU) were rated according to this system for the Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS) developed in support of the Forest Plan Revision. This original version of the AMS (dated 1990) 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 Kruzof Roadless Area was 21 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 22. This rating reflects the more consolidated area and the ability for the area to absorb effects of developments and activities nearby.

(4) Ecologic and Geologic Values: This area includes most of the north portion of Kruzof Island, as well as Partofshikof Island and a number of other smaller islands and rocks. It is not part of a larger unroaded land area.

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

The Anadromous Waters Catalogue and Atlas (ADF&G, 2000) shows eight unnamed fish-bearing streams in this roadless area, all but one on Kruzof Island. These streams drain into Kalinin Bay, Sinitsin Cove, Sukoi Inlet, and Sealion Cove. Most of these streams provide habitat for coho, pink and chum salmon, and Dolly Varden char. The stream draining into Sealion Cove also provides habitat for sockeye salmon.

(b) Wildlife Resources: There are many varied wildlife resources in this roadless area. Bird and waterfowl rearing and nesting areas are abundant in this area. Generally, the area provides good habitat for deer, brown bear, and furbearers such as marten and mink. Bald eagle habitat, nesting and roosting trees, is found along the shorelines of this roadless area. MacDonald and Cook (1999) do not list black bear, wolves, moose, or mountain goats as inhabiting this area.

(c) Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species: The only federally listed threatened or endangered species likely to occur within or adjacent to the roadless area are the humpback whale (endangered) and the Steller sea lion (threatened). Both of these species are found in adjacent marine waters. Three Forest Service Region 10 Sensitive Species are suspected or known to occur within the area: the trumpeter swan, Peale's peregrine falcon, and the Queen Charlotte goshawk. Trumpeter swans nest in the lowlands on small lakes and along large rivers and winter in ice-free areas throughout the Tongass. Peale's peregrine falcons nest on cliff faces and islands and feed primarily on seabirds. Peale's peregrine falcons pass through the forests during their spring and fall migration flights. Inhabitants of late seral forests, Queen Charlotte goshawks are closely associated with productive old growth. In addition, 12 sensitive plant species are known or suspected to occur in the Sitka 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 glaciers or unique geologic features.

(5) Scientific and Educational Values: There are no known features of ecologic, geologic, scientific, or cultural significance in this area. There are no Research Natural Areas in this area. Sitka, located approximately 15 miles southeast of the area, is the closest community with school-age children.

(6) Scenic Values: The visual character type of this roadless area is classified as Admiralty-Chichagof. Landforms in this unit are generally rounded. Rocky islands, reefs, and rock bluffs are found frequently on the outer coast. Rocky shorelines interspersed with small gravel beaches are found throughout the character type. Streams are generally short and swift on the west side of the roadless area. The streams are clear and many offer considerable visual variety, e.g., pools, rapids, cascades, riffles, falls, and meandering forms. Saltwater bays and estuaries are numerous and exhibit much variety, from small sheltered coves to large exposed forms. Often dramatic high energy seas occur on the outer coast.

Evidence of historic use includes old fish cold storage facilities in Kalinin Bay, old cabins, and other historic occupancies. Current use includes the temporary fish buying scow, various short-term occupancies, and other evidence of use of the area and surrounding waters. Some beach logging has occurred in patches along the shorelines east and west of Sukoi Inlet. This activity is likely to be apparent to visitors that visit the specific sites. However, the roadless area generally appears to be unmodified from major travel routes and popular use areas.

Visual Priority Routes and Use Areas identified by the Forest Plan, that are within or adjacent to the area, include: Neva Strait (Alaska Marine Highway); the west coast of Kruzof Island (tour ship route); Kalinin Bay, Sukoi Inlet, Neva Strait, Salisbury Sound, Southeast Kruzof Island, Gilmer Bay, and St. John Baptist Bay (small boat routes); Salisbury Sound and Point Amelia to Sealion Cove (saltwater use areas); Sealion Cove (#508) (hiking trail); Kalinin Bay (boat anchorage); and Sealion Cove (dispersed recreation area).

About 12 percent of the roadless area is inventoried as Variety Class A (possessing landscape diversity that is unique for the character type). Approximately 16 percent of this roadless area is inventoried as Visual Variety Class B (possessing landscape diversity that is common for the character type), and approximately 72 percent as Variety Class C (possessing a low degree of landscape diversity).

The majority of this roadless area, approximately 85 percent, is inventoried in Existing Visual Condition (EVC) I, which are areas that appear to be untouched by human activity. About one percent of the area is in EVC III, where the average person may notice changes in the landscape, but they do not attract attention. Approximately 7 percent of the acreage is in EVC IV, which are areas where changes in the landscape are easily noticed by the average person and may attract some attention. There appear to be disturbances but they resemble natural patterns. Six percent of the area is in EVC V, where changes in the landscape are obvious to the average person and appear to be major disturbances.

(7) Social, Cultural, and Historical Values: This area has a long and varied history of use dating from Tlingit use in prehistoric and historic times to the present use by a variety of Alaska residents and visitors. Use of the area has been primarily for hunting, fishing, recreation, and temporary occupancy. Remains of structures and other human cultural activity in varying degrees of deterioration can still be found. Goldschmidt and Haas (1946) identified a former smokehouse/cabin in this area. The area is located approximately 15 miles northwest of Sitka.

Appendix C

There are no National Forest System trails and one public recreation shelter in the area. The Sealion Cove Trail, which extends from Kalinin Bay to Sealion Cove, is located immediately northwest of the area.

The Tongass Fish and Wildlife Resource Assessment (ADF&G, 1998) identified the six VCUs wholly or partially located within the area as subsistence use areas with a high sensitivity to disturbance. Three of these six VCUs (302, 303, and 309) were included among the VCUs with highest community use values (ADF&G, 1998).

(8) Manageability as Wilderness and Boundary Conditions/Changes: With the exception of the northwest boundary, the North Kruzof Roadless Area is generally well defined by topographic features. The boundaries determined by Gilmer Bay, the Pacific Ocean, Salisbury Sound, Neva Strait, and Krestof Sound are easily described and recognized. Even the southern boundary, which is result of a road system and timber activity, roughly parallels one steeply sloped ridge of mountains over 2,000 feet in elevation and a second one over 1,500 feet. The northwest boundary is formed by an area of non-National Forest System lands. This boundary is a series of straight lines that do not follow natural topographic features. The feasibility of managing this area as wilderness or in an unroaded condition is generally good as there is no significant motorized access or other current nonconforming uses.

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

(1) Recreation, Including Tourism Potential: The varied terrain, diverse vegetation, and attractive scenery of this area provide unlimited recreation potentials for dispersed recreation. Trails and cabins or shelters are possible.

In 1996, the Alaska Visitors Association (AVA) proposed a backcountry recreation lodge for Kalinin Bay and Sinitzin Bay, as well as recreation developments in the vicinity of Neva Strait and Salisbury Sound. The AVA also proposed the following developments for Gilmer Bay: hut-to-hut hiking for 12 persons/day, day boat docks with a 20 person capacity, flight seeing landings for 10 persons/day, day use recreation for 100 persons/day, and a day use wildlife observatory for 30 persons/day.

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

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

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

(5) Timber Resources: There are 12,519 acres mapped as productive old growth in the roadless area. There are also 117 acres of second growth where timber harvest has occurred in the past. Of these acres, 7,769 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), 489 acres or 2 percent of this roadless area are estimated to be as suitable for timber production. Approximately 151 of the suitable acres are mapped as high-volume old growth; of these acres, less than 10 are mapped as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth.

The potential for managing timber in this roadless area is dependent on higher market values and harvest methods that would allow roading.

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

(7) Minerals: The area does not have a high mineral development potential. However, the USGS Mineral Resources Data website (USGS, 2001) shows an explored claim for copper and unexplored molybdenum resources in the Sealion Cove area. This area contains 17,510 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:** There are no proposed transportation or utility corridors within or adjacent to this area. The area is bordered to the south by developed areas that could be extended into the roadless area where Forest Plan LUDs allow.
- (9) **Water Availability and Use:** There is a developed recreation shelter that could create some water demand. There are no existing or planned hydroelectric or domestic water projects in the area.
- (10) **Areas of Scientific Interest:** There are no known areas of scientific interest in the roadless area.
- (11) **Land Use Authorizations:** There are authorizations for facilities associated with a fish buying station in Kalinin Bay and the Forest Service and the Federal Aviation Agency Radio sites in the southern portion of the area.
- (12) **Land Status:** The area consists entirely of National Forest System lands, although there are non-National Forest System lands located adjacent to the northeastern part of the roadless area. Encumbered land within the roadless area is located in the southeastern part of Sinitsin Cove.

IV. Wilderness Evaluation (Need for Wilderness)

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

(a) **Interest Expressed by Local Users and Residents:** Most use of the area is associated with recreational boating, hunting, and fishing, and viewing wildlife and the scenery of the area.

(b) **Congressional Interest:** In 1989, U.S. House of Representatives Bill HR 987 proposed to designate 23 areas as wilderness on the Tongass National Forest. This bill did not include the Middle Kruzof Roadless Area. In 2001, HR 2908 identified the area as a proposed LUD II addition. It also proposed that the drainage flowing into Gilmer Bay be protected as a Wild and Scenic River. The developed area that borders this roadless area to the south was identified for protection as a Restoration Area.

(c) **Public Input During Forest Plan Revisions and Appeals:** This area was specifically addressed in public input received during the Forest Plan revision and appeal. Commenters requested that Kruzof Island be managed for Semi-Primitive or Primitive recreation, or Old Growth. Kalinin Bay was identified as a high-use recreation area with a prime anchorage that deserves the “strongest protection possible.” Kalinin Bay was also identified as an area deserving special protection by the Southeast Alaska Conservation Council (SEACC) in their comments on the 1991 and 1996 forest planning documents. About 100 letters generated in response to a SEACC “alert” (“Tongass Action Alert: Your Voice Needed”) identified Kalinin Bay and North Kruzof Island as areas deserving the “strongest protection possible.”

Middle Kruzof Island was identified by another commenter as an area that should be managed for a local wood products industry. Comments were also provided for Management Area (MA) C44, which includes the North Kruzof Roadless Area. The Sierra Club Juneau Group requested that there be no further logging in MA C44 until its impact on “our resource of the future, tourism” is fully assessed. Timber industry commenters requested that the area be managed for timber production, emphasizing its importance to the Sitka economy.

The AVA proposed the following recreation developments for Gilmer Bay: hut-to-hut hiking for 12 persons/day, day boat docks with a 20-person capacity, flight-seeing landings for 10 persons/day, day-use recreation for 100 persons/day, and a day-use wildlife observatory for 30 persons/day. The AVA also proposed a backcountry recreation lodge for Kalinin Bay and Sinitsin Bay, as well as recreation developments in the vicinity of Neva Strait and Salisbury Sound.

The Forest Plan appeal filed by SEACC identified three of the six VCUs that are wholly or partially located within the area as part of the Sitka Local Use Area, a “SEACC Special Area”, where clearcutting should not be permitted. The appeal filed by the Hoonah Indian Association et al. requested that logging not be permitted along “the stretch of lands and islands on both sides of the various narrows that span from Sitka Sound to

Appendix C

Hoonah Sound” because the subsistence harvest of deer in this area “already exceeds the sustainable hunting level by a wide margin” and logging would exacerbate this situation. This appeal also expressed similar concerns for North Kruzof Island.

(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: This area is not within the study area of any recently completed project-level EISs.

(f) Public Input Expressed During Supplemental EIS Process: The U.S. Department of the Interior identified this roadless area as having important fish and wildlife habitat and populations; although not a top priority for protection, it ranked in their top third among all roadless areas.

SEACC recommended Roadless Areas 326, 327, and 329 on Kruzof Island to be permanently protected through designation as LUD II. The Alaska Rainforest Campaign (a coalition of national and Alaska conservation groups) recommended Roadless Area 326 for permanent protection as LUD II.

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

Some thought the island contains valuable low elevation forest that should be protected. A number of individuals felt this area should be protected, especially because it has little timber and is heavily used by Sitkans.

(2) Nearby Roadless and Wilderness Areas and Uses: The nearest wilderness is the West Chichagof-Yakobi Wilderness, which is located directly across Salisbury Sound from the North Kruzof Roadless Area. Two other nearby wildernesses are the South Baranof Wilderness about 26 miles south of the area and the Admiralty National Monument-Kootznoowoo Wilderness, approximately 34 miles to the east.

Nearby roadless areas include Middle Kruzof (#327) and South Kruzof (#329), both on Kruzof Island; and Sitka Sound (#332), which is located directly across Neva Strait from Partofshikof Island. The Middle Kruzof (#327) and South Kruzof (#329) Roadless Areas were allocated to the Timber Production, Modified Landscape, Old-growth Habitat, Semi-Remote Recreation, and Special Interest Area LUDs. The Sitka Sound Roadless Area (#332) was assigned to the Semi-Remote Recreation, Timber Production, Scenic Viewshed, and Old-growth Habitat LUDs.

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

Community	Air Miles	Water Miles
Juneau (Pop. 30,711)	85	140
Sitka (Pop. 8,835)	15	20
Hoonah (Pop. 860)	55	115
Angoon (Pop. 572)	35	55

The nearest stop on the Alaska Marine Highway is Sitka.

(4) Relative Contribution to the National Wilderness Preservation System: The North Kruzof Roadless Area is located on the north end of Kruzof Island and includes Partofshikof Island, which is located immediately east of the area, as well as a number of smaller offshore islands and rocks. The area is generally bordered to the north by Salisbury Sound, to the west by the open Pacific Ocean, and to the south by developed areas that extend the width of the island from Gilmer Bay to Krestof Sound. Non-National Forest System lands border the area to the northwest. Neva Strait borders the area to the east. Sukoi Inlet separates the Kruzof Island portion of the area from Partofshikof Island. The topography of the area is generally characterized by small irregular mountains or ridges, 1,000 to 2,000

feet in elevation, with steep slopes. Numerous rocky crests and sharp ridges are found scattered throughout the area. The coastline is scalloped with bays and coves, and encompasses Sukoi Strait between Kruzof Island and Partofshikof Island.

The area generally appears natural and unmodified. The natural integrity and apparent naturalness is very high. There is a relatively high opportunity for solitude and primitive recreation within the area.

Approximately 12 percent of the landscape is considered distinctive from a scenery standpoint. There are no known features of ecologic, geologic, scientific, or cultural significance in this area.

The roadless area includes about 4,673 acres of high-volume, old-growth forest. Of these acres, approximately 371 are mapped as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth.

The North Kruzof Roadless Area is classified as being in the West Baranof Island Biogeographic Province and makes up about 3 percent of the province. It is one of eight inventoried roadless areas found within the province that collectively make up about 62 percent of the province. The majority of the South Baranof Wilderness is also within this province and makes up approximately 29 percent of the province.

The North Kruzof Roadless Area lies completely within the Baranof-Chichagof Fjordlands Ecological Section. This portion represents 1 percent of the entire ecological section, which is well represented in existing wilderness (28 percent) and other non-development LUDs (35 percent) with an additional 13 percent in LUD II.

This roadless area is entirely within the Sitka Sound Complex Ecological Subsection; this portion of the roadless area represents 14 percent of the entire ecological subsection, which is well represented in non-development LUDs (67 percent), but does not occur in wilderness or LUD II.

The North Kruzof Roadless Area was rated 22 out of a possible 28 points under the Wilderness Attribute Rating System (WARS). As such, its WARS rating is ranked 38th from the highest (along with 8 other roadless areas) among the 109 Tongass inventoried roadless areas.

There is both local and national support for managing the roadless area in an unroaded condition, but there has been little support for designating the area as wilderness. Designation of the area would add Congressional protection to about 14 percent of the Sitka Sound Complex Ecological Subsection, which currently contains no areas under Congressional protection. Designation would create a relatively small wilderness that does not have any outstanding or unique values or features. Overall, the factors identified here indicate that the relative contribution of this area to the National Wilderness Preservation System would be moderate.

V. Environmental Consequences.

The North Kruzof Roadless Area would be managed under the existing Forest Plan if Alternative 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 7 is implemented. Approximately 71 percent of the roadless area would be managed under non-development LUDs. Timber harvest and road development could occur within the remaining 29 percent of the roadless area. The land in the development LUDs includes an estimated 489 acres that are suitable for timber production (1 percent of the suitable acres on the Sitka Ranger District). Less than 10 of the suitable acres are classified as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. The area is considered to have low potential mineral development. However, the USGS Mineral Resources Data website shows an explored claim for copper and unexplored molybdenum resources in the Sealion Cove area. This area contains 17,510 acres of undiscovered locatable mineral resources. The values associated with the natural settings of the roadless area could be affected by developments allowed by the Forest Plan.

Under Alternative 6, the entire roadless area would be converted to Recommended LUD II. Mineral prospecting and recreation developments could continue, but no timber harvest would be allowed. The values associated with the natural settings of the roadless area, including scenic values, would be provided long-term protection if designated LUD II. Designation of the area would add Congressional protection to about 14 percent of the Sitka Sound Complex Ecological Subsection, which currently contains no areas under Congressional protection.

Appendix C

With Alternative 8, the entire roadless area would be converted to Recommended Wilderness. Timber harvest would not be allowed and the potential for other development, including recreation and mineral, would be significantly 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 scenic values, would be provided long-term protection if designated wilderness. Designation of the area would add Congressional protection to about 14 percent of the Sitka Sound Complex Ecological Subsection, which currently contains no areas under Congressional protection.

Land Use Designation Allocations and Suitable Timber Lands by Alternative for Roadless Area 326 (in acres)								
Land Use Designation	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7	Alt 8
Recommended Wilderness								25,373
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	8,239	8,239	8,239	8,239	8,239		8,239	
Semi-remote Recreation	9,786	9,786	9,786	9,786	9,786		9,786	
Recommended LUD II						25,373		
LUD II								
Wild, Scenic, Recreational River								
Experimental Forest								
Scenic Viewshed								
Modified Landscape								
Timber production	7,348	7,348	7,348	7,348	7,348		7,348	
TOTAL	25,373	25,373	25,373	25,373	25,373	25,373	25,373	25,373
Suitable Timber Lands	489	489	489	489	489	0	489	0