

# Appendix C

## INDIVIDUAL ROADLESS AREA DESCRIPTION

**ROADLESS AREA NAME:** Salmon Bay (518)

**ACRES (NFS):** 27,412

**BIOGEOGRAPHIC PROVINCE:** North Central Prince of Wales Island

**ECOLOGICAL SECTION:** Kupreanof Lowlands, Kuiu-Prince of Wales Fjordlands

**2003 WILDERNESS ATTRIBUTE RATING:** 20

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

(1) **Location and Access:** The Salmon Bay Roadless Area is located on the north end of Prince of Wales Island. It is approximately 50 air miles north of Hollis, currently the closest stop on the Alaska Marine Highway. Sumner Strait lies to the north, and Clarence Strait lies to the east. The roadless area is bounded by areas developed for timber management on the west and south, and there are pockets of developed areas in the north and east. The area is accessed by floatplane or boat from saltwater at Salmon Bay, California Bay, and Red Bay and by forest roads at many points near the boundaries. Floatplanes can also access Salmon Bay Lake. There are no places suitable for landing wheeled airplanes. Access away from roads and water is by foot or helicopter. There is a public recreation cabin located on Salmon Bay Lake. The Salmon Bay Lake Trail is the only developed trail in the roadless area and it connects the lake with Salmon Bay but does not provide access to the cabin.

(2) **History:** The coastal portion of the Salmon Bay Roadless Area has been used by humans in prehistoric and historic times. The Salmon Bay area was the site of fish canneries in the early 1900s. The northern part of the roadless area has been prospected for rare earth minerals. Beach logging has modified most of the forest along the saltwater shores.

(3) **Geography and Topography:** The area is characterized by low elevation but rugged terrain. The maximum elevation is 2,000 feet. Numerous small streams drain to Salmon Bay Lake, the largest body of fresh water in the roadless area. There are 49 miles of saltwater shoreline, 1,135 acres of islands, 32 acres of rock, 219 acres of alpine, and 1,040 acres of lakes.

(4) **Ecosystem:**

(a) **Classification:** Biogeographic Province. The area is in the North Central Prince of Wales Island Province. This province is characterized by gentle relief in the landscape. All of the forest plant associations in Southeast Alaska except those that are found only on the mainland occur in this province. This area typically has high precipitation, karst topography in which caves are common, and numerous wetlands.

Ecological Section/Subsection. The Salmon Bay Roadless Area is contained within the Kupreanof Lowlands Ecological Section (M247G) and the Kuiu-Prince of Wales Fjordlands Ecological Section (M247F). These areas are represented by three ecological subsections (see table below). The Central Prince of Wales Till Lowlands Ecological Subsection (54% of roadless area) is characterized by gentle undulating terrain comprised of deep organic till that supports vast wetland complexes. Low productive forested wetlands cover almost half of the landscape and hemlock forests exist in the smaller portion of well-drained mineral soils on hillslopes. The North Prince of Wales Complex Ecological Subsection (41% of roadless area) is characterized by rolling hills and wide U-shaped valleys underlain by non-carbonate conglomerate and granodioritic rocks. Productive hemlock and hemlock-spruce forests comprise about two thirds of the landscape, and the remainder is low productive mixed-conifer and lodgepole pine forested wetlands. The North Prince of Wales-Kuiu Carbonates Ecological Subsection is characterized by low-

elevation hills and mountain slopes underlain by limestone and marble karstlands. Hemlock and hemlock-spruce forests are found on karst soils, which can be highly productive (Nowacki et al., 2001).

Ecological Section	Ecological Subsection	Percent of Roadless Area
Kupreanof Lowlands	Central Prince of Wales Till Lowlands	54%
Kuiu-Prince of Wales Fjordlands	North Prince of Wales Complex	41%
	North Prince of Wales-Kuiu Carbonates	5%

**(b) Soils:** These highly organic, low clay content soils are generally formed over bedrock and are typically about 40 inches deep. Generally, steeper areas have better-drained soils, and flat areas are poorly drained. Some of the soils in the area are derived from limestone.

**(c) Vegetation:** Vegetation is typical Southeast Alaska coastal temperate rain forest. The forest is primarily western hemlock and Sitka spruce with large components of cedar. Approximately 1,294 acres of muskeg are mapped for the area; however, due to their small size and association with forested sites, accurate acreage estimates are difficult. Wetland soils also play a major role in vegetative development within the roadless area.

There are approximately 24,719 acres mapped as forest land of which 11,157 acres or 45 percent are mapped as productive old-growth forest. Of the productive old growth, 3,989 acres or 36 percent are mapped as high-volume old-growth forest. The productive old growth includes about 1,733 acres of high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. There are 685 acres of second growth which is associated with older beach logging.

**(d) Fish Resources:** Sockeye, coho, pink, and chum salmon, cutthroat, steelhead and rainbow trout, and Dolly Varden char inhabit the waters of this roadless area. The Anadromous Waters Catalogue (ADF&G, 2000) identifies the primary fish-bearing waters as Salmon Bay Lake and stream, Red Bay streams, White Sox Creek, Pine Creek, Salmon Bay Lake, and Exchange Lake (ADF&G, 2000).

**(e) Wildlife Resources:** Sitka black-tailed deer, black bear, wolves, mink, marten, otters, and bald eagles are among the species that inhabit the area. Moose inhabit Prince of Wales Island, but brown bear and mountain goats do not (MacDonald and Cook, 1999).

**(5) Management Direction and Current Uses:** This roadless area was allocated to six different Land Use Designations (LUDs), under the 1997 Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan. These six LUDs are Modified Landscape, Timber Production, Scenic Viewshed, LUD II, Old-growth Habitat, and Semi-remote Recreation.

LUD	Acres
Modified Landscape	6,966
Timber Production	3,546
Scenic Viewshed	1,854
Old-growth Habitat	3,783
LUD II (including LUD II/Wild and Scenic River)	11,076
Semi-remote Recreation	187

Approximately 45 percent of the roadless area was allocated to a development LUD, which allows timber harvest and the associated road construction (Modified Landscape, Timber Production, and Scenic Viewshed). In the western part of the roadless area, approximately 25 percent of the roadless area was allocated to the Modified Landscape LUD. Approximately 13 percent of the roadless area was allocated to the Timber Production LUD. The Scenic Viewshed LUD was assigned to approximately 7 percent of the roadless area.

## Appendix C

Much of this roadless area, 55 percent, was allocated to a non-development LUDs (LUD II, Old-growth Habitat, LUD II/Wild and Scenic River, and Semi-remote Recreation). Approximately 40 percent of the roadless area was allocated to the LUD II designation, creating the Salmon Bay LUD II area. In and around Salmon Bay Lake, approximately 11 percent of the area allocated to LUD II was also allocated to the Wild and Scenic River LUD and is managed under both designations. Approximately 4 river miles of Salmon Bay Lake and Stream are wild, and approximately 2 river miles are scenic. The Old-growth Habitat LUD was assigned to 14 percent of the roadless area. Approximately 1 percent of the roadless area was allocated to the Semi-remote Recreation LUD. This LUD includes the small islands associated with the roadless area that were not allocated to LUD II.

There is a public recreation cabin at the north end of Salmon Bay Lake and a developed trail that accesses the lake from Salmon Bay. In 2000, two outfitter/guides operated in this area, providing sightseeing (two service days) and freshwater fishing (two service days). The roadless area is used for subsistence by residents of several communities on the northern half of Prince of Wales Island, especially Point Baker, Port Protection, and Whale Pass. None of the VCUs in the roadless area are listed among the VCUs with the highest community fish and wildlife values.

**(6) Appearance (Apparent Naturalness):** The area is unmodified and in a natural condition except for the public recreation cabin at Salmon Bay Lake and the trail to the lake. Remnants of a fish weir and associated structures such as tent platforms, outhouse, and building from ADF&G fish surveys are located at the mouth of Salmon Bay Creek. Most of the northern and eastern shoreline has been beach logged in the past, but no longer appears modified as vegetation has regrown.

**(7) Surroundings (External Influences):** The adjacent coastal areas to the north and east have been beach logged with little or no roading; however, areas to the west and south have been extensively roaded. There is a narrow strip of developed land that forms the western boundary of this roadless area and separates this roadless area from the El Capitan Roadless Area that lies to the west. There is a small area of non-National Forest System land along the north shore and a larger area in the southwest that has been developed.

**(8) Attractions and Features of Special Interest:** The natural features of the area, the scenery, rich cultural history, especially around Salmon Bay, and the opportunity to see wildlife and to study the processes which formed this country may all be attractions. The outstanding stream and lake fishing and solitude of the Salmon Bay Lake area are an attraction. The area contains 10 inventoried recreation places, which cover 13,048 acres, or 48 percent of the roadless area. The public recreation cabin at Salmon Bay Lake and the trail that accesses the lake from Salmon Bay are attractions.

**(9) Differences between the 1989 and 2003 Roadless Area Boundary:** There have been several changes to the roadless area boundaries since 1989. Areas in the south and west that now have been developed are no longer part of the roadless area. A small area in the north and a larger area in the southwest are no longer National Forest System lands and are no longer part of the roadless area. Areas along the shore that were beach logged several decades ago but not roaded have been included in the roadless area. Also, the boundaries have been adjusted slightly as the result of more accurate mapping. Several smaller areas along the developed boundaries have been excluded between the Draft and Final SEIS to improve the potential manageability of the roadless area as wilderness.

### **II. Capability for Management as Wilderness**

**(1) Natural Integrity and Apparent Naturalness:** The area is unmodified and in a natural condition except for the public recreation cabin and the trail that provides access from Salmon Bay Lake to Salmon Bay. Areas along the shore that were beach logged several decades ago appear natural now that trees have regrown. Timber harvest and other management activities concentrated on the south and southeast are seldom viewed from major use areas such as the cabin, Salmon Bay Lake, the trail, and anchorage, but can be viewed from high elevation peaks along the boundaries of the roadless area. However, the developments that form most of the exterior boundaries of the roadless area affect the area little, so that it can exhibit moderate to high natural integrity and apparent naturalness.

**(2) Opportunity for Solitude and Serenity, Self-reliance, Adventure, Challenging Experiences, and Primitive Recreation:** There is a high to very high mix of opportunity for solitude and serenity, self-reliance,

adventure, challenging experiences, and primitive recreation within the roadless area. These opportunities are especially high in the northeastern and coastal portions of the roadless area. The coastal areas are remote and primitive, with isolated and deserted islands, extreme tides, challenging ocean currents, no nearby towns, and few travelers. Primitive recreation opportunities are abundant and may include fishing, hiking, camping, caving, hunting, and sea kayaking. These opportunities may diminish within the southern portion of the roadless area where ongoing timber management activities have occurred and are planned. Timber sales and associated activities are scheduled for some areas southeast of Salmon Bay Lake. These activities may be periodically heard near the lake. Floatplanes transporting people to the Salmon Bay Lake cabin may disturb others using the lake area for brief periods. Present recreation use levels are not well documented except for the Salmon Bay cabin, which received 40 visitors in fiscal year 2001. A person camped within the area is unlikely to see others. In 2000, two outfitter/guides operated in this area, providing sightseeing and freshwater fishing services.

The dense vegetation typical in Southeast Alaska, the rugged terrain, and the presence of black bears contribute to the challenging experiences when hiking or camping in the area. As with all backcountry areas on the Tongass, the opportunity for challenge and risk in this area is high. The climate, the isolation, the 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 recreation opportunities. The table below lists the acreage and percent of the various Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) classes that have been inventoried in the roadless area.

ROS Class	Acres	Percent of Total ROS
Primitive (P)	2,883	11%
Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized (SPNM)	17,225	63%
Semi-Primitive Motorized (SPM)	1,383	5%
Roaded Natural (RN)	96	0%
Roaded Modified (RM)	5,798	21%

The area contains 10 inventoried recreation places, which cover 13,048 acres, or 48 percent of the roadless area.

ROS Class	# of Rec. Places*	Total Acres
Primitive	0	0
SPNM	3	10,330
SPM	3	615
RN	1	96
RM	8	2,007

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

The only developed recreation facilities in the roadless area are the public recreation cabin at Salmon Bay Lake and the trail that accesses the lake from Salmon Bay. There are outstanding dispersed recreation opportunities in the Salmon Bay and Salmon Bay Lake 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

## Appendix C

support of the Forest Plan Revision. This original version of the AMS included both the individual VCU ratings done in 1979 and the composite rating that was done for each roadless area in 1989. The 1989 rating for the Salmon Bay Roadless Area was 21 out of 28 possible points. The 1989 rating was reevaluated for this updated version of the AMS. Based on this reevaluation, the area was given a rating of 20. The difference is reflective of changes in size of the roadless area caused by ongoing developments in the vicinity of the roadless area.

**(4) Ecologic and Geologic Values:** The roadless area contains important wintering habitat for waterfowl, including trumpeter swans, and for black bear. The roadless area also contains karst features. The North Prince of Wales Road and associated developments separate the Salmon Bay Roadless Area from the El Capitan Roadless Area (517) to the west.

**(a) Fish Resources:** Tongass Fish and Wildlife Resource Assessment (ADF&G, 1998) listed VCUs 532 and 534.1 as primary sport fish producers. No VCUs were listed as primary salmon producers.

Sockeye, coho, pink and chum salmon, cutthroat, steelhead and rainbow trout, and Dolly Varden char inhabit the waters of this roadless area. The Anadromous Waters Catalogue (ADF&G, 2000) identifies the primary fish-bearing waters as Salmon Bay Lake and stream, White Sox Creek, Pine Creek, Salmon Bay Lake, and Exchange Lake (ADF&G, 2000). Sockeye, coho, pink, and chum salmon, cutthroat trout, and Dolly Varden char inhabit White Sox Creek.

Salmon Bay Lake and Stream are rated “outstandingly remarkable” for their regionally significant fishery. ADF&G lists this system among the 65 “important” watersheds in Southeast Alaska. All species of Pacific salmon except chinook are found in the river, as well as cutthroat and rainbow trout and Dolly Varden char. The lake and stream have a steelhead run of about 100 adult fish. Salmon Bay Creek receives an estimated peak escapement of 4,400 pink salmon and has good coho production (ADF&G, 1998).

**(b) Wildlife Resources:** Sitka black-tailed deer, black bear, wolves, mink, marten, otters, and bald eagles are among the species that inhabit the area. Moose inhabit Prince of Wales Island, but brown bear and mountain goats do not (MacDonald and Cook, 1999). The area between Salmon Bay Lake and saltwater contains a major intertidal grassflat, which is frequented by wintering waterfowl, including trumpeter swans, and black bear (TLMP, 1997). Based on data compiled from 1985 to 1994, VCU 532 along Red Bay is listed among the top 25 percent of VCUs for black bear harvest and VCU539, further south, is listed in the second 25 percent (ADF&G 1998).

**(c) Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species.** The only federally listed threatened and endangered species likely to occur within or adjacent to the roadless area are the humpback whale (endangered) and the Steller sea lion (threatened). Both of these species are found in adjacent marine waters. Four Forest Service Region 10 Sensitive Species are suspected or known to occur within the area: the trumpeter swan, osprey, Peale’s peregrine falcon, and the Queen Charlotte goshawk. Trumpeter swans nest in the lowlands on small lakes and along major rivers and winter in ice-free areas throughout the Tongass. Trumpeter swans winter at Salmon Bay Lake. 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. In addition, nine sensitive plant species are known or suspected to occur in the Thorne Bay Ranger District.

**(d) Karst, Cave, and Other Geologic Resources:** There are karst resources in this roadless area encompassing 3,651 acres, or 13 percent of the area, most of which is low vulnerability. There is also one band of low vulnerability karst in this roadless area, running along the Pine Creek drainage. There are no glaciers or unique geologic features in the area.

**(5) Scientific and Educational Values:** There are opportunities to study wildlife, especially wintering waterfowl, fish, and karst formations. There are no nearby educational institutions.

**(6) Scenic Values:** This roadless area is part of the Kupreanof Lowlands Character Type which is characterized by predominantly low rolling relief, with elevations seldom greater than 1,500 feet. Numerous island groups and intricate waterways are also common in this character type. This area with the low rolling relief around Salmon Bay Lake and the coastal features is very representative of this character type. Salmon Bay Lake and Stream have been recommended for Wild and Scenic River designation primarily for their scenic values.

The roadless area appears predominately unmodified when viewed from the priority routes listed in the Forest Plan. Once in the roadless area, visitors occasionally may see a landscape of timber harvest and road activity or more often the natural scenic landscape, depending on the visitor's location. The special features of this area are centered around Salmon Bay, with its diverse island groups, grass flats, intricate shorelines, and saltwater channels. A large sand beach and views of the alpine scenery of Maggie Mountain are seen from the Salmon Lake cabin.

Visual Priority Routes and Use Areas identified by the Forest Plan that are within or adjacent to the area include Sumner Strait, a tour ship route; Salmon Bay State Marine Park; the Salmon Bay Lake and stream, which are recommended for Wild and Scenic River designation; Salmon Bay, Red Bay and the beach areas on north Prince of Wales Island, which are dispersed recreation areas; the Salmon Bay Lake public recreation cabin; the Salmon Bay Lake Hiking Trail; and the Salmon Bay boat anchorage.

About 6 percent of the area was rated as Variety Class A, possessing a high degree of landscape diversity. These Class A landscapes are located around Salmon Bay. About 64 percent of this area was inventoried as Variety Class B, possessing landscape diversity common for the character type. About 29 percent was rated as Variety Class C, which has a minimal degree of landscape diversity relative to the character type. Approximately 2 percent of the area was not rated for Variety Class type.

About 76 percent of the area is in Type I Existing Visual Condition (EVC) where the natural landscape has remained unaltered by the human activity. About 2 percent of the area has an EVC II, where changes in the landscape are not noticeable to the average visitor unless pointed out. Eight percent of the area has an EVC III, where the average person notices changes in the landscape, but this does not dominate the landscape. Land with an EVC IV is found in another 7 percent of the area, where alterations to the landscape are obvious but tend to blend with natural landscape features. Due to the extensive development along the edge of this area, about 5 percent of the area has a Type V EVC, where changes to the landscape are obvious to the average visitor. Approximately 2 percent of the area was not rated for EVC.

**(7) Social, Cultural, and Historical Values:** The coastal portion of the Salmon Bay Roadless Area has been used by humans in prehistoric and historic times. The Salmon Bay area was the site of fish canneries in the early 1900s. The northern part of the roadless area has been prospected for rare earth minerals. Beach logging has modified most of the forest along the saltwater shores. The roadless area is used for subsistence by residents of several communities on the northern half of Prince of Wales Island, especially Point Baker, Port Protection, and Whale Pass and by residents of Wrangell due to its proximity and ease of access. VCU 532 along Red Bay is listed among the VCUs with the highest community use value, and almost all VCUs (not including 534.2 in the northeast corner of the island) are 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:** Developed areas form the boundaries of this roadless area, except for the north and northeast along the shores of Sumner Strait and Clarence Strait. The influences of these developments (sights and sounds), as well as noise from general vehicle traffic outside the area, affect the apparent naturalness of the southern portion of this roadless area. Management of this area in a roadless condition is feasible but could be improved if topographic features surrounding the Salmon Bay LUD II area were used as the boundaries instead of the current boundaries.

### **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 attracting over 1.1 million visitors annually. This trend in tourism is expected to continue to increase. Wildlife viewing,

## Appendix C

camping, hiking, caving, sea kayaking, fishing, hunting, and exploring have the potential to increase as tourism and recreation increase throughout Alaska. The roadless area is approximately 100 miles by road from Hollis, currently the closest stop on the Alaska Marine Highway. There are also plans to add a terminal in Coffman Cove that would provide service between Coffman Cove and Wrangell, providing closer access to this roadless area. Good road access may encourage many of the tourists visiting the island to recreate in the roadless area. The area has good potential for low density, primitive recreation experiences. There is potential for additional trails connecting Salmon Bay Lake to saltwater and connecting the logging road system to the southern end of Salmon Bay Lake. There is potential for one additional recreation cabin at Salmon Bay Lake. In 1996, the Alaska Visitors Association (AVA) proposed developing trails and cabins in Salmon Bay.

- (2) **Subsistence Uses:** The existing patterns of subsistence activities in the area would not be affected by wilderness designation.
- (3) **Fish Resources:** No fish habitat enhancement projects are planned within the roadless area.
- (4) **Wildlife Resources:** No wildlife habitat enhancement projects are planned within the roadless area.
- (5) **Timber Resources:** There are 11,157 acres inventoried as productive old-growth forest and 685 acres of second-growth forest in the roadless area. Of this, approximately 5,079 acres are categorized as tentatively suitable for timber harvest. Based on the Forest Plan LUDs assigned to this area (and estimated falldown and scheduling reduction factors), 1,682 acres (6 percent) of this roadless area are estimated to be suitable for timber production. Approximately 458 of the suitable acres are mapped as high-volume old growth; of these acres, 142 are mapped as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth.  
  
Managing timber in most of the roadless area would require extending the existing road system into the roadless area. This could easily be done since the existing peripheral area has an extensive logging road network and the necessary sites for transferring logs to saltwater. The Lab Bay project approved harvest units and the roads needed to access them. Several timber sales are planned.
- (6) **Fire, Insects, and Disease:** The area has no known fire history. Endemic tree diseases common to Southeast Alaska are present.
- (7) **Minerals:** There is no current mining, and no known prospecting is being conducted within this roadless area. The northern part of this area is known to contain some rare earth minerals including uranium (USGS, 2001). This area contains an estimated 2,658 acres of undiscovered locatable mineral resources (Brew et al., 1990; USDA Forest Service, 1991); all of these acres are considered to have moderate potential for development.
- (8) **Transportation and Utilities:** There are no transportation or utility projects proposed for this area. There is a major road corridor along the western boundary of the roadless area, linking the north end of Prince of Wales Island with Hollis and other communities.
- (9) **Water Availability and Use:** The only water demand in the roadless area comes from the public recreation cabin on Salmon Bay Lake. There are no existing or planned hydroelectric or domestic water projects within the roadless area.
- (10) **Areas of Scientific Interest:** The grass flats near Salmon Bay and the wintering waterfowl that they support are of scientific interest. Karst features may also be of interest. The mapped karst resources encompass approximately 3,651 acres or 13 percent of the roadless area.
- (11) **Land Use Authorizations:** There are no land use authorizations within the roadless area.
- (12) **Land Status:** All of the roadless area is National Forest System land. Two small areas in Salmon Bay have encumbrances.

#### IV. Wilderness Evaluation (Need for Wilderness)

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

(a) **Interest Expressed by Local Users and Residents:** Local residents are primarily concerned with maintaining the area for recreation and subsistence use.

(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. A portion of the roadless area was designated LUD II by the Tongass Timber Reform Act. In 2001, HR 2908 proposed managing the entire roadless area as LUD II in an unroaded condition.

(c) **Public Input During Forest Plan Revision and Appeals:** The Southeast Alaska Conservation Council recommended that the area be managed to preserve its integrity. They stated that the area merited special protection for its outstanding wildlife, fisheries, hunting, subsistence, recreation, and tourism values. Point Baker and Port Protection residents and the Sumner Strait Fish and Game Advisory Board requested that the area be dedicated to subsistence use. The Juneau Convention and Visitors Bureau recommended that the area be managed to support high-quality sport fishing. The Petersburg Fish and Game Advisory Board and the Narrows Conservation Council recommended that the entire Salmon Bay watershed be protected from logging and road building because of unstable soils, subsistence, fisheries, and recreation resources, old-growth habitat, high populations of fish and wildlife, and commercial and sport fishing. Others recommended that the area outside of the LUD II boundary be logged. The Narrows Conservation Council also recommended the fullest protection as a Wild and Scenic River. The Alaska Forest Association, the Alaska Miners Association, and the AVA recommended that no new wilderness be designated on the Tongass National Forest. Others stated that all unroaded areas should be designated wilderness. Timber industry representatives recommended managing all areas not designated as wilderness for timber. In 1996, the AVA proposed developing trails and cabins at Salmon Bay.

(d) **Public Input During Roadless Area Conservation Rule and Road Management Policy Review:** This area was not specifically identified in the public comments received during 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.

(e) **Public Input Expressed for Project-level EISs and Other Input:** No project-level comments on this roadless area have been identified.

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

SEACC recommended this area be designated as LUD II. The Alaska Rainforest Campaign (a coalition of national and Alaska conservation groups) recommended Roadless Area 518 for permanent protection as LUD II.

A number of cave/karst experts and other individuals stated that the North Central Prince of Wales Biogeographic Province contains the most celebrated and explored caves and karstlands in the Tongass. The Salmon Bay Roadless Area contains karstlands that are contiguous with those in the El Capitan area. The commenters indicated that these karstlands could be combined with Roadless Areas 515 and 516 to create a karst reserve/wilderness that would be renowned throughout the world.

A number of individuals identified the 1999 additions to the Salmon Bay Lake area as needing protection. One commented on the need for permanent protection for Red Bay and Salmon Bay Lake. One wanted permanent protection of the entire area as LUD II.

## Appendix C

(2) **Nearby Roadless and Wilderness Areas and Uses:** The Salmon Bay Roadless Area is separated from other roadless areas by developed areas. The Kosciusko Roadless Area (515) lies approximately 4 miles to the southwest on Kosciusko Island. The El Capitan Roadless Area (517) lies 1 to 2 miles to the west. The closest wilderness is the Kuiu Wilderness, approximately 18 miles to the northwest on Kuiu Island. Recreation and subsistence are the major uses for these areas. Use levels are generally low.

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

<b>Community</b>	<b>Air Miles</b>	<b>Water Miles</b>
Ketchikan (Pop. 14,070)	80	90
Wrangell (Pop. 2,308)	35	35
Petersburg (Pop. 3,324)	35	40
Juneau (Pop. 30,711)	145	170

Hollis, approximately 50 air miles to the south on Prince of Wales Island, currently is the nearest stop on the Alaska Marine Highway.

(4) **Relative Contribution to the National Wilderness Preservation System:** The Salmon Bay Roadless Area is located on the north end of Prince of Wales Island. Sumner Strait lies to the north and Clarence Strait lies to the east. The roadless area is bounded by areas developed for timber management on the west and south, and there are pockets of developed areas in the north and east. The area is characterized by low elevation but rugged terrain. The maximum elevation is 2,000 feet. Numerous small streams drain to Salmon Bay Lake, the largest body of water in the area.

The area is unmodified and in a natural condition; however, it is heavily influenced along most of its borders. The natural integrity of the area is moderate, and the apparent naturalness is rated high. The opportunity for solitude is high, and the opportunity for primitive recreation is very high.

The area has moderate scenic quality; approximately 6 percent of the landscape is considered distinctive from a scenery standpoint. Salmon Bay Lake and Stream are the most prominent features of this roadless area, and most of their drainage is designated as LUD II.

The roadless area includes about 3,989 acres of high-volume, old-growth forest. Of these acres, approximately 1,733 are mapped as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth.

The Salmon Bay Roadless Area is classified as being in the North Central Prince of Wales Island Biogeographic Province and makes up about 2 percent of the province. It is one of 15 inventoried roadless areas found within the province, which make up about 44 percent of the province. The Karta River Wilderness makes up about 3 percent of the province, and three designated LUD II areas (Mt. Calder-Mt. Holbrook, Pt. Baker-Port Protection, and Salmon Bay) make up about 5 percent of the province.

The Salmon Bay Roadless Area lies within two ecological sections; it represents 1 percent of the Kuiu-Prince of Wales Fjordlands Ecological Section and 1 percent of the Kupreanof Lowlands Ecological Section. Both of these ecological sections contain relatively small areas in existing wilderness (13 and 1 percent, respectively) and existing LUD II (8 and 1 percent, respectively), but are well represented by other existing non-development LUDs (33 percent, each).

Approximately half (54 percent) of the roadless area is in the Central Prince of Wales Till Lowlands Ecological Subsection; this portion of the roadless area represents 6 percent of the entire ecological subsection. None of this ecological subsection is in existing wilderness, but 3 percent is in LUD II, and an additional 42 percent is protected by other existing non-development LUDs. Forty-one percent of the roadless area is in the North Prince of Wales Complex Ecological Subsection; this portion represents 14 percent of the entire ecological subsection, 28 percent of which is in existing LUD II and 18 percent is protected by other existing non-development LUDs. Five percent of the roadless area is in the North Prince of Wales-Kuiu Carbonates Ecological Subsection; this portion represents 1

percent of the entire ecological subsection, 2 percent of which is in existing LUD II and 25 percent is protected by other existing non-development LUDs.

The Salmon Bay Roadless Area was rated 20 out of a possible 28 points under WARS. As such, its WARS rating is ranked 53<sup>rd</sup> from the highest (along with 16 other roadless areas) among the 109 Tongass inventoried roadless areas.

There is both local and national support for managing the roadless area in an unroaded condition and some support for designating the area as a wilderness. Designation would create a wilderness that would include the Salmon Bay Lake watershed and its associated recreation developments and uses. The roadless area includes timber harvest areas authorized under the Lab Bay FEIS to the east of the Salmon Bay watershed. The degree of timber harvest in adjacent lands adds importance to the old growth within the roadless area. Overall, the factors identified here indicate that the relative contribution of this area to the National Wilderness Preservation System would be moderate.

### **V. Environmental Consequences**

The Salmon Bay Roadless Area would be managed under the existing Forest Plan if Alternative 1, 3, or 4 is implemented. Approximately 55 percent of the roadless area would be managed under non-development LUDs. Timber harvest and road development could occur within the remaining 45 percent of the roadless area. The land in the development LUDs includes an estimated 1,682 acres that are suitable for timber production (1 percent of the suitable acres on the Thorne Bay Ranger District). Approximately 142 of the suitable acres are classified as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. This area contains an estimated 2,658 acres of undiscovered locatable mineral resources; all of these acres are considered to have moderate potential for development. The timber sale located on the eastern portion of the roadless area would continue. The recreation, minerals, and special use programs would continue. The values associated with the natural settings of the roadless area could be affected by ongoing activities allowed by the Forest Plan. The karst values and most of the old growth and scenic values are protected by the Forest Plan.

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

Under Alternatives 5 and 7, 18,306 acres entailing the Salmon Bay watershed would be converted to Recommended Wilderness LUD, affecting current allocations of LUD II, Semi-remote Recreation, Old-growth Habitat, Scenic Viewshed, Timber Production and Modified Landscape LUDs. Ongoing recreation, special use, and minerals programs could be restricted in the Recommended Wilderness LUD area. No timber harvest would be allowed. Lands suitable for timber production would be reduced to 980 acres. Mineral prospecting would be allowed in the Recommended Wilderness LUD up to the time that the area is actually designated as wilderness by Congress. The values associated with the natural settings of the Salmon Bay watershed portion of the roadless area, including the scenic, old growth, and karst values, would be provided long-term protection if designated wilderness.

Under Alternative 6, a 16,335-acre portion of the area would be converted to Recommended LUD II. This would eventually convert all lands not currently designated as LUD II to LUD II. Ongoing recreation, special use, and minerals programs would continue similar to current conditions with little restriction. No timber harvest would be allowed. The values associated with the natural settings of the roadless area, including the scenic, old growth, and karst values, would be provided long-term protection if designated LUD II.

Under Alternative 8, the entire roadless area would be converted to Recommended Wilderness LUD. Ongoing recreation, special use, and minerals programs could be restricted in the Recommended Wilderness LUD area. No timber harvest would be allowed. Mineral prospecting would be allowed in the Recommended Wilderness LUD up to the time that the area is actually designated as wilderness by Congress. The values associated with the natural

## Appendix C

settings of the roadless area, including the scenic, old growth, and karst values, would be provided long-term protection if designated wilderness.

<b>Land Use Designation Allocations and Suitable Timber Lands by Alternative for Roadless Area 518 (in acres)</b>								
<b>Land Use Designation</b>	<b>Alt 1</b>	<b>Alt 2</b>	<b>Alt 3</b>	<b>Alt 4</b>	<b>Alt 5</b>	<b>Alt 6</b>	<b>Alt 7</b>	<b>Alt 8</b>
Recommended Wilderness		11,076			18,306		18,306	27,412
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	3,783	3,783	3,783	3,783	870		870	
Semi-remote Recreation	187	187	187	187	179		179	
Recommended LUD II						16,335		
LUD II	11,076		11,076	11,076		11,076		
Wild, Scenic, Recreational River								
Experimental Forest								
Scenic Viewshed	1,854	1,854	1,854	1,854	621		621	
Modified Landscape	6,966	6,966	6,966	6,966	4,278		4,278	
Timber production	3,546	3,546	3,546	3,546	3,158		3,158	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27,412</b>	<b>27,412</b>	<b>27,412</b>	<b>27,412</b>	<b>27,412</b>	<b>27,412</b>	<b>27,412</b>	<b>27,412</b>
Suitable Timber Lands	1,682	1,682	1,682	1,682	980	0	980	0