

Appendix C

INDIVIDUAL ROADLESS AREA DESCRIPTION

ROADLESS AREA NAME: Cone (206)

ACRES (NFS): 127,874

BIOGEOGRAPHIC PROVINCE: Ice Fields and Central Coast Range

ECOLOGICAL SECTION: Boundary Ranges

2003 WILDERNESS ATTRIBUTE RATING: 28

I. Overview and Description

(1) **Location and Access:** The Cone Roadless Area is located on the mainland approximately 15 air miles east of Wrangell. Wrangell is served by the Alaska Marine Highway and regular jet service. It is bounded on the north and east by the Canadian border; on the west by the Stikine-LeConte Wilderness and the Aaron Roadless Area; and on the south by the Harding and Bradfield Roadless Areas. Access is only by foot or helicopter. No suitable sites exist for landing wheeled aircraft or floatplanes.

(2) **History:** Since the area drains entirely into Canada and is accessible only with great difficulty from the Alaskan side, there has been little use of the area in the past. The area has been prospected for minerals and claims have been located. Two routes were considered for a possible road link between saltwater and the Canadian highway system in the late 1980s. Portions of both routes would pass through this roadless area. The Bradfield route is included as a route for consideration by Southeast Conference in their ongoing assessment of long-term transportation needs for Southeast Alaska, and would cross the eastern portion of the Cone Roadless Area. This route was also considered for development of a 69 kV transmission line in the late 1980s, and may be considered again because of the Swan-Lake Tye Intertie line which is under construction.

(3) **Geography and Topography:** The area is generally characterized as highly-complex terrain dominated by rugged mountains, many of which reach elevations of over 5,000 feet; the tallest is over 6,800 feet. Between the mountains are deep, narrow valleys containing several sizable streams, including the Katete River and its West Fork, which feed into the Stikine River to the north in Canada, and the Craig River, which flows northeast into Canada and ultimately flows into the Iskut River. Dominant waterforms include the high velocity streams and small glaciers that occupy the highest mountains. Alpine covers approximately 2,361 acres, ice and snow cover another 32,295 acres, and rock accounts for about 39,824 acres. The area does not contain any shoreline on saltwater or freshwater lakes.

(4) **Ecosystem:**

(a) **Classification:** Biogeographic Province. The northern portion of the area is located in the Central Coast Range Biogeographic Province, but the majority of the area is in the Ice Fields Province. The roadless area is generally characterized as a core of massive, angular mountains capped with ice fields at high elevations near the Canadian border, with somewhat lower mountains, deeply incised valleys and glacier-fed streams closer to the Stikine River. However, it does not contain the massive ice fields present elsewhere along the coast range. The Stikine River system, located north of the Cone Roadless Area, has a major continental influence and provides a migration corridor for plant and animal species. There are no known areas of unique or uncommon plant/soils associations or geologic formations in the area.

Ecological Section/Subsection. The Cone Roadless Area is contained entirely within the Boundary Ranges Ecological Section (M246B). This area is represented by two ecological subsections (see table below). The Boundary Ranges Icefields Ecological Subsection covers the majority, 92 percent, of the Cone Roadless Area. A northwest-southeast trending batholith of resistant granite and granodiorite underlies this portion of the Coast Mountains. It consists of a discontinuous mix of icefields and glaciers separated by

river valleys and pierced by nunataks and scree fields. Forests comprise a minor part of the vegetation along coasts and rivers. The remainder, 8 percent, of the roadless area is composed of the Stikine-Taku River Valleys Ecological Subsection. These rivers, which carry a large amount of sediment, have cut deeply incised valleys through the Coast Range. The erodible, poorly developed soils on the valley floors are colonized by alder, willow, and cottonwood (Nowacki et al., 2001).

Ecological Section	Ecological Subsection	Percent of Roadless Area
Boundary Ranges	Boundary Ranges Icefields	92%
	Stikine-Taku River Valleys	8%

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

More-poorly-drained soils have developed on less sloping areas and/or areas with impermeable soil materials. 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.

(c) Vegetation: Alpine vegetation mapped as 2,361 acres, dominates above an elevation of 2,500 feet. Below that elevation, the steep mountain sides are heavily marked with snowslide and landslide paths, which are typically covered with grass, alders and willows. Occasionally, cottonwoods and fir may be found along the valley bottoms and floodplains. Approximately 149 acres of muskeg are mapped for the area, however due to their small size and association with forested sites, accurate acreage estimates are difficult.

There are approximately 29,578 acres mapped as forest land, of which 10,698 acres or 36 percent are mapped as productive old-growth forest. Of the productive old growth, 2,393 acres or 22 percent are mapped as high-volume old-growth forest. The productive old growth includes about 26 acres of high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. There is no second-growth forest where timber harvest has occurred in the past.

(d) Fish Resources: Fish resources in the area are considered to be of moderate value from a regional perspective. The Katete River, which empties into the Stikine River in Canada, and produces chum, chinook, and coho salmon, is the largest salmon producer (especially the West Fork) within the Cone Roadless area.

(e) Wildlife Resources: A small population of mountain goats ranges over the area, as do black and brown bears, wolves, Sitka black-tailed deer, and moose. Productive old-growth forest habitat is limited primarily to the lower Katete and Craig River drainages.

(5) Management Direction and Current Uses: This area was allocated to two Land Use Designations (LUDs) in the 1997 Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan. These two LUDs are Timber Production and Semi-remote Recreation.

LUD	Acres
Timber Production	73
Semi-remote Recreation	127,801

Appendix C

Less than 1 percent of the roadless area was allocated to one development LUD, Timber Production. The Timber Production LUD is located in the southeastern part of this roadless area.

Almost 100 percent of the area was allocated to one non-development LUD. This widely allocated designation is the Semi-remote Recreation LUD.

Land or water access to the area is very difficult, requiring helicopter access or entry into Canada on the Stikine River, then up the Katete River mostly on foot to the U.S. border, and then entry into the area on foot. It is also theoretically possible, but very difficult, to access the area through adjacent roadless areas. There are no facilities of any kind. The area receives little use and there is no known subsistence use.

(6) Appearance (Apparent Naturalness): Overall, the area has high scenic quality with a natural appearing landscape and provides spectacular scenery from the Stikine River valley and from within the area.

(7) Surroundings: This roadless area is part of a large unroaded area that stretches from the Misty Fiords National Monument south of the area, to the Skagway Juneau Icefield Roadless Area near Juneau. Three other roadless areas border most of the area. The Stikine Leconte Wilderness area lies to the northwest of this area. Canada is adjacent to the north boundary. Activities on the Canadian side of the border are most likely to influence this area. While there are no known intrusions at the present time, the area around the Iskut River in Canada is heavily mineralized and mining discoveries could lead to mine development in the area. A potential dam for hydroelectric power generation on the Iskut River in Canada may affect this area to some degree.

(8) Attractions and Features of Special Interest: The natural features of the area, remoteness, solitude, the scenery, and the opportunity to see wildlife and to study the processes that formed this country may all be attractions. The area contains one inventoried recreation places and there are no improved trails.

(9) Differences between the 1989 and 2003 Roadless Area Boundary: The roadless area boundaries have not changed between 1989 and 2003.

II. Capability for Management as Wilderness

(1) Natural Integrity and Appearance (Apparent Naturalness): The area is essentially unmodified, except for minor effects from old mineral prospecting. The majority of this roadless area (98 percent) is unmodified. The natural appearance of the landscape dominates the entire area, including the area where modification has occurred. The natural integrity and appearance of this area is, therefore, suitable for wilderness classification.

(2) Opportunity for Solitude and Serenity, Self-reliance, Adventure, and Challenging Experiences, and Primitive Recreation: There is a outstanding opportunity for solitude and primitive recreation within the area. Low-flying airplanes traveling between Wrangell and the Canadian mines near the Iskut River may at times pass over the area and be observed by people in this roadless area. Present recreation use levels are very low because access is very difficult. A person camped in the area is very unlikely to see others.

Because of the high degree of isolation experienced by visitors in the area, the steep terrain, and the difficult accessibility of the majority of the area, opportunities for self-reliance, adventure, and challenging experiences are high. As with all backcountry areas on the Tongass, the opportunity for challenge and risk in this area is high. The climate, the rugged terrain, the isolation and distance from population centers with medical facilities, the barriers to communication, and the presence of large wild animals all contribute to the need for good preparation and knowledge of backcountry survival skills for anyone using this area. Hypothermia and bear encounters are just two examples of the many risks that must be considered before traveling in the backcountry of Southeast Alaska.

The area provides primarily 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.

There are no developed recreation facilities in the area. The character of the landforms allows the visitor to feel remote from the sights and sounds of human activity. The area is accessible with difficulty. It requires helicopter access or entry into Canada by way of the Stikine River Valley and then on foot up the Katete River drainage,

presenting a high degree of physical challenge. It is also theoretically possible, but very difficult, to access the area through adjacent roadless areas.

ROS Class	Acres	Percent of Total ROS
Primitive (P)	127,873	100%

The area contains one inventoried recreation place that covers less than one acre, or less than one percent of the roadless area.

ROS Class	# of Rec. Places	Total Acres
P	1	<1

(3) Wilderness Attribute Rating System: In 1977, a Forest Service task force 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 conducted by the Forest Service (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 Analysis of the Management Situation developed in support of the Forest Plan Revision. At that time, the Cone Roadless Area was given a rating of 27 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 28. The higher score reflects a very low or no effect on natural integrity from old mineral activity, as well as the overall outstanding wilderness attributes offered by the area.

(4) Ecologic and Geologic Values: This area is part of a very extensive mainland roadless area, which includes portions of western British Columbia. As such, it contributes to one of the largest areas of North America that has essentially only been affected by ecologic and geologic processes.

This roadless area is partially forested. Forested areas are located along the river valleys, with areas of old-growth forest concentrated along the Katete and Craig River drainages by the Canadian border.

(a) Fish Resources: The VCUs in this area were not rated as primary salmon or sport fish producers (ADF&G, 1998).

Several drainages in this area form the headwaters of the Katete and other rivers that empty into the Stikine River. No escapement data is available for the Katete River, much of which is located in Canada. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game Stream Catalog indicate that chum, chinook, and coho salmon inhabit the West Fork Katete River, which is considered to have moderate fish habitat value from a regional perspective.

(b) Wildlife Resources: This area is only partially forested and does not significantly contribute to the Tongass old-growth reserve network. It does, however, provide opportunities for wildlife, such as wolves, bears, and moose, to move between the Stikine and Iskut River valleys in Canada to the Aaron Creek, Harding River, and Bradfield River drainages. Productive old-growth forest habitat is limited primarily to the lower Katete and Craig River drainages.

(c) Threatened and Endangered Species: The only federally listed threatened and endangered species in the Tongass are the humpback whale (endangered) and the Steller sea lion (threatened), both marine species. There is no marine habitat available in the Cone. 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

Appendix C

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. In addition, eight sensitive plant species are known or suspected to occur in the Wrangell Ranger District.

(d) Karst, Cave, and Other Geologic Resources: There are no known karst or cave resources in the area.

(5) Scientific and Educational Values: There are opportunities to observe and study fish, wildlife, forest and alpine ecology, ice fields, geologic formations, and the forces and processes which formed the mountains.

(6) Scenic Values: The visual landscape is characterized by a highly-complex terrain dominated by rugged mountains and glaciers and deep narrow valleys containing some sizeable streams. No Visual Priority Routes and Use Areas were identified by the Forest Plan within the area.

About 81 percent of this roadless area is inventoried Variety Class A (possessing landscape diversity that is unique for the character type), and 19 percent is inventoried Variety Class B (possessing landscape diversity that is common for the character type). The majority of this roadless area, 98 percent, has an Existing Visual Condition (EVC) Type I, where only ecological and geological change has occurred. Two percent of this roadless area is EVC Type III, where the natural appearance of the landscape remains dominant, but the average forest visitor notices changes in the landscape.

(7) Social, Cultural, and Historic Values: This area is located approximately 15 air miles from Wrangell, which is the closest community. Wrangell is also the closest stop on the Alaska Marine Highway. There are no developed recreation facilities or improved trails in the area and present recreation use levels are very low. There is no known current or historic subsistence use. The VCUs in this area were not included among those with the highest community use value or among the VCUs with highest sensitivity to disturbance of community use areas (ADF&G, 1998).

(8) Manageability as Wilderness and Boundary Conditions/Changes: The boundaries, of this roadless area are well defined by topographic features that separate the Katete and Craig River watersheds from watersheds in adjacent roadless areas and the Stikine-LeConte Wilderness. The north and east boundaries of this roadless area are formed by the U.S./Canadian border. This roadless area is part of a larger mainland unroaded area that includes the Stikine-LeConte Wilderness to the northwest, the Bradfield Roadless Area to the south, the Harding Roadless Area to the southwest, the Aaron Roadless Area to the west, and the Canadian mountains to the north and east. The immediately surrounding lands are allocated to the Semi-remote Recreation and Wilderness LUDs.

A portion of the adjacent Bradfield Roadless Area is allocated to the Timber Production LUD. Timber harvest and road construction has occurred along the north and east forks of the Bradfield River, approximately 5 miles south of the Cone Roadless Area. There currently is limited development on the adjacent lands on the Canadian side of the border, but the area around the Iskut River to the north is heavily mineralized and mining discoveries could lead to mine development closer to the Cone Roadless Area.

The Cone Roadless Area has well defined boundaries, is surrounded by unroaded land, and is very difficult to access. These characteristics suggest that management of this area as wilderness would require little change from present management conditions.

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

(1) Recreation, Including Tourism Potential: The potential for increased recreation use or facility development is low unless access is improved. If a road to Canada is constructed through the area, then use and demand would likely increase. However, a lack of specific destination features would limit use. Because of its proximity to Wrangell, there is potential for helicopter tours and access to the alpine and glaciers of the area.

- (2) **Subsistence Uses:** There is no known current or historic subsistence use of the area. The existing patterns of subsistence activities in the area would not be affected by wilderness designation or management in an unroaded condition.
- (3) **Fish Resources:** No fish habitat enhancement projects have been identified for this area.
- (4) **Wildlife Resources:** There is potential for moose and mountain goat habitat enhancement in the area. This roadless area is only partially forested and would not contribute significantly to the old-growth reserve network. It does, however, provide opportunities for wildlife, such as wolves, bears, and moose, to move between the Stikine and Iskut River valleys in Canada to the Aaron Creek, Harding River, and Bradfield River drainages.
- (5) **Timber Resources:** There are approximately 10,698 acres mapped as productive old growth and no acres mapped as second growth due to harvesting in the roadless area. Of these acres, 3,899 acres are categorized as tentatively suitable for timber production. However, because of the LUDs identified for this area under the current Forest Plan, none of these acres are categorized as suitable for timber production. Even if the Forest Plan classified the area as suitable, harvest would not be likely unless a road is built into the area for other purposes. The nature of the steep slopes and scattered timber make it doubtful that timber harvest would be economical even if the road were financed by other sources.
- (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 in the area.
- (7) **Minerals:** Prospecting has occurred and there are several invalid mining claims in the area. The roadless area contains an estimated 68,701 acres of undiscovered locatable mineral resources (Brew et al., 1990; USDA Forest Service, 1991); 19,225 of these acres are considered to have moderate potential for development.
- (8) **Transportation and Utilities:** Two routes were considered for a possible road link between saltwater and the Canadian highway system in the late 1980s. Portions of both routes would pass through this roadless area. One route would come from Wrangell, up Aaron Creek, and would enter this roadless area along the West Fork of the Katete River, accessing the main Stikine River valley. Another proposal is to build a road from Bradfield Canal up the North Fork of the Bradfield River and enter Canada through this roadless area by way of the Craig River drainage. The possibility of a new roadway along the Bradfield Canal was considered as part of the Southeast Alaska Transportation planning process. It was also the subject of a 1998 feasibility report prepared by the U.S. Forest Service for the U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations. This road was not, however, included in the March 1999 Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan (Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, 1999). The Bradfield route is included as a route for consideration by Southeast Conference in their ongoing assessment of long-term transportation needs for Southeast Alaska, and would cross the eastern portion of the Cone Roadless Area. This route was also considered for development of a 69 kV transmission line in the late 1980s, and may be considered again because of the Swan-Lake Tye Intertie line which is under construction.
- (9) **Water Availability and Use:** There are no recreation or other facilities located in this roadless area. As a result, there is no demand for water for domestic use. There are a number of rivers running through this area, but the lack of roads and generally poor access suggest that this is unlikely to be a good site for hydroelectric development.
- (10) **Areas of Scientific Interest:** The area contains no inventoried potential Research Natural Areas. The area has not been specifically identified for any scientific value.
- (11) **Land Use Authorizations:** There are no land use authorizations in the area. Authorization was given for development of a 69 kV electric transmission line along the North Fork of the Bradfield River to the Canadian border in the late 1980s. A portion of this transmission line would have been located in the Cone Roadless Area. Authorization for this transmission line was, however, terminated with no work done on the project.
- (12) **Land Status:** The entire roadless area consists of National Forest System lands. National Forest System lands also occupy all adjacent areas within the United States. Canadian land occupy the areas adjacent to the north and east boundaries.

Appendix C

IV. Wilderness Evaluation (Need for Wilderness)

(1) Public and Congressional Interest

(a) Interest associated with Local Users and Residents: There is virtually no local use of the area. Local Wrangell residents have been and continue to be interested in developing a road from Wrangell through this area to the Canadian highway system.

(b) Congressional Interest: Two bills from the U.S. House of Representatives included wilderness proposals for Southeast Alaska. In 1989, U.S. House of Representatives Bill HR 987 did not include this area. In 2001, HR 2908 did not propose the area for wilderness, but did propose it to be classified as a Congressionally Designated LUD II area and managed in an unroaded condition.

(c) Public Input During Forest Plan Revision and Appeals: This area was not specifically identified in the public comments received during the Forest Plan revision and appeals. However, some commenters wanted all unroaded lands in the Tongass to be protected from development.

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

(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.

SEACC recommended that the Madan, Aaron, Cone, Harding, and Bradfield complex should be considered one roadless area and should be recommended for permanent protection as LUD II. The Alaska Rainforest Campaign (a coalition of national and Alaska conservation groups) identified Roadless Areas 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 528, and 529 as a contiguous complex of roadless areas that should be considered one roadless area and recommended it for permanent protection as LUD II.

The mayor of Wrangell noted that the Cone area should not be recommended for wilderness because two of the road corridor routes to Canada that would be precluded (i.e., the Bradfield and Craig rivers). They indicated that designation as wilderness would require the Stikine and Unuk Rivers as the best option for a route to tidewater from Canada, and these areas should be avoided. The highway connection is very important for Wrangell.

(2) Nearby Roadless and Wilderness Areas and Uses: The Cone Roadless Area is part of a larger mainland unroaded land mass that is located between the Bradfield Roadless Area to the southeast, the Harding Roadless Area to the southwest, the Aaron Roadless Area to the west, and the Canadian mountains to the north. The adjacent mainland areas generally receive light use, primarily near saltwater. Inland use is generally very light with the exception of the Stikine River corridor in the Stikine-LeConte Wilderness, the lower portions of the North Fork and East Fork of the Bradfield River, the lower Harding River, and the flats near the mouth of Aaron Creek.

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

<u>Community</u>	<u>Air Miles</u>	<u>Water Miles</u>
Ketchikan (Pop. 14,070)	65	140
Wrangell (Pop. 2,308)	15	40
Petersburg (Pop. 3,224)	45	60
Juneau (Pop. 30,711)	155	160

The area is not accessible by water.

Wrangell is the nearest stop on the Alaska Marine Highway.

(4) Relative Contribution to the National Wilderness Preservation System: The Cone Roadless Area is located on the mainland approximately 15 air miles east of Wrangell. It is bounded on the north and east by the Canadian border; on the west by the Stikine-LeConte Wilderness and the Aaron Roadless Area; and on the south by the Harding and Bradfield Roadless Areas. The area is generally characterized as highly-complex terrain dominated by rugged mountains, many of which reach elevations of over 5,000 feet; the tallest is over 6,800 feet. Between the mountains are deep, narrow valleys containing several sizable streams. Dominant waterforms include the high velocity streams and small glaciers that occupy the highest mountains. The area is mostly unmodified. The roadless area has outstanding natural integrity, apparent naturalness, and opportunity for solitude and primitive recreation.

The area has very high scenic qualities; approximately 81 percent of the landscape is considered distinctive for the character type from a scenery standpoint. The area is rugged, has small glaciers and icefields, and is very difficult to access.

The roadless area includes about 2,393 acres of high-volume, old-growth forest. Of these acres, 26 are mapped as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth.

The Cone Roadless Area lies partially within the Ice Fields and Central Coast Range Biogeographic Provinces. Approximately 79 percent of the roadless area is within the Ice Fields province and makes up about 3 percent of that province. It is one of nine inventoried roadless areas found in the province that collectively make up about 67 percent of the province. Portions of the Tracy Arm-Fords Terror, Stikine-LeConte, and Misty Fiords National Monument Wilderness lie within the Ice Fields Province and make up about 33 percent of the province. The other 21 percent of the Cone Roadless Area is located within the Central Coast Range province and makes up about 4 percent of the province. It is one of nine inventoried roadless areas found in the province that collectively make up about 59 percent of the province. Portions of the Stikine-LeConte Wilderness lie within the Central Coast Range province and make up about 38 percent of the province.

The Cone Roadless Area lies completely within the Boundary Ranges Ecological Section and represents 3 percent of the ecological section. This ecological section is well represented by existing wilderness (33 percent) and by other existing non-development LUDs (62 percent, including 1 percent in LUD II).

Approximately 92 percent of the roadless area is in the Boundary Ranges Icefields Ecological Subsection; this portion of the roadless area represents 3 percent of the entire ecological subsection, which is well represented in existing wilderness (32 percent) and by other existing non-development LUDs (61 percent). The remaining 8 percent of the roadless area is in the Stikine-Taku River Valleys Ecological Subsection; this portion of the roadless area represents 13 percent of the entire ecological subsection. This ecological subsection is well represented by existing wilderness (43 percent) and by other existing non-development LUDs (53 percent).

The Cone Roadless Area was rated 28 out of a possible 28 points under the Wilderness Attribute Rating System (WARS). As such, its WARS rating is ranked the highest among the 109 Tongass inventoried roadless areas.

There is both local and national support for managing the area in an unroaded condition, and some support for designation as wilderness. Designation would create a wilderness which has the highest WARS rating of all the inventoried roadless areas on the Tongass. It would expand the Stikine-LeConte Wilderness. It would include some zones of higher mineralization. Overall, the factors identified here indicate that the relative contribution of this area to the National Wilderness Preservation System would be very high.

V. Environmental Consequences

The Cone Area would be managed under the existing Forest Plan if Alternative 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 7 is implemented. Nearly all of the roadless area would be managed under non-development LUDs, which mostly maintains the outstanding wilderness attributes and values associated with the size and isolation of the area. Timber harvest and road development could occur in the remaining less than 1 percent. However, none of the land in the development

Appendix C

LUDs is considered suitable for timber production. The roadless area contains an estimated 68,701 acres of undiscovered locatable mineral resources; 19,225 of these acres are considered to have moderate potential for development. The recreation, minerals, and special use programs would continue.

Under Alternative 6, the entire area would be converted to Recommended LUD II. Although the LUD II would not extend the Stikine-LeConte Wilderness, it would provide for long-term protection of the same wilderness attributes and values if designated. The ongoing recreation, minerals, and special use programs would continue similar to current conditions. No timber harvest would be allowed.

Under Alternative 8, the entire roadless area would be converted to Recommended Wilderness LUD. The roadless area's outstanding wilderness attributes and values associated with its size and isolation would be provided long-term protection and extend the Stikine-LeConte Wilderness to the south and east if designated wilderness. The ongoing recreation, minerals, and special uses programs could be restricted. Mineral prospecting would be allowed up to the time that the area is actually designated as wilderness by Congress.

Land Use Designation Allocations and Suitable Timber Lands by Alternative for Roadless Area 206 (in acres)								
Land Use Designation	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7	Alt 8
Recommended Wilderness								127,874
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								
Semi-remote Recreation	127,801	127,801	127,801	127,801	127,801		127,801	
Recommended LUD II						127,874		
LUD II								
Wild, Scenic, Recreational River								
Experimental Forest								
Scenic Viewshed								
Modified Landscape								
Timber Production	73	73	73	73	73		73	
TOTAL	127,874	127,874	127,874	127,874	127,874	127,874	127,874	127,874
Suitable Timber Lands	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0