

## INDIVIDUAL ROADLESS AREA DESCRIPTION

**ROADLESS AREA NAME:** Mosman (233)

**ACRES (NFS):** 56,757

**BIOGEOGRAPHIC PROVINCE:** Etolin Island and Vicinity

**ECOLOGICAL SECTION:** Inside Passage Fjordlands

**2003 WILDERNESS ATTRIBUTE RATING:** 22 (21, 23, 24)

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

**(1) Location and Access:** The area is located in the central-western portion of Etolin Island. It is composed of three lobes, separated by Mosman and Burnett Inlets. It is bounded by Clarence Strait on the west and a portion of the south, the South Etolin Roadless Area on the east, the South Etolin Wilderness on a portion of the south and east, Ernest Sound to the south, and an area of roads and harvest units to the north. The city of Wrangell lies almost 25 miles to the northeast, and is served by the Alaska Marine Highway and jet service. There are no sites suitable for landing wheeled aircraft. A small road system and log transfer facility exists on the island immediately north of the roadless area. The island is accessible from saltwater by boat, and good moorage sites exist. Forest roads located immediately north provide road access to the area. Access into the interior is by foot or helicopter.

**(2) History:** This area was claimed by several Stikine Tlingit clans during prehistoric times. Evidence includes the remains of villages, fish camps, fish weirs, petroglyphs, and bark-stripped trees. Evidence of historic use includes fox farms, trapping cabins, homesteads, canneries and temporary camps. Goldschmidt and Haas' (1946) mapping project identified a former camp and two smokehouses around the shoreline of this area. They also identified a cemetery near Cooney Cove and commercial fish traps and building remnants on the west shoreline of the area.

Beach logging has occurred at a number of locations in the area, primarily in relatively isolated patches along Mosman and Burnett Inlets. Small areas have also been logged at the head of Cooney Cove and on Mosman Island. The Steamer Bay recreation cabin is located in the northwest part of the area on the east side of Steamer Bay.

**(3) Geography and Topography:** The area is generally characterized by a series of mountains oriented nearly in a north-south alignment, separated by the long, narrow waterways of Mosman and Burnett Inlets. There is much landform variety as some of the mountains are gentle, while others, such as the Keating Range, rise steeply. Alpine covers 1,873 acres and rock covers 1,523 acres. There are no ice or snow features mapped in the area. The highest peaks attain elevations of about 3,000 feet. Numerous short streams drain the area. Several lakes exist in the area, the major ones being Streets Lake to the west, and Navy and Burnett Lakes on the east side of the roadless area. These lakes cover about 581 acres. Small islands make up another 1,843 acres. There are 156 miles of saltwater shoreline in this area.

**(4) Ecosystem:**

**(a) Classification: Biogeographic Province.** The area is in the Etolin Island and Vicinity Biogeographic Province. This province is generally subject to continental influence from the mainland and the Stikine River. All forest plant associations except those occurring only on outer coast areas are present.

Ecological Section/Subsection. The Mosman Roadless Area is contained entirely within the Inside Passage Fjordlands Ecological Section (M247E), represented by three ecological subsections (see table below). The Etolin Granitics Ecological Subsection is the dominant subsection covering 43 percent of the Mosman Roadless Area. Jagged granite spires with a thin layer of soil and extensive alpine vegetation cover much of the Etolin Granitics Ecological Subsection. Productive forests are limited to colluvium at the base of

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slopes. The Stikine Strait Complex Ecological Subsection, covering 34 percent of the roadless area, is a combination of glacially carved volcanic or sedimentary rock and glacial deposition in the valleys. Wetlands and low productivity forests cover much of the Stikine Strait Complex Ecological Subsection. The balance of the roadless area, 23 percent, is within the Clarence Strait Volcanics Ecological Subsection, consisting of volcanic peaks bordering the east side of Clarence Strait in a southwesterly or northeasterly direction. Glaciers have smoothed the topography and left a legacy of broad valleys, steep slopes, alpine lakes, hanging valleys, and coastal lowlands. Plant cover is dependent on soil permeability and much of the Clarence Strait Volcanics Ecological Subsection is not forested. Productive hemlock or hemlock-spruce forests are limited to well-drained slopes (Nowacki et al., 2001).

<b>Ecological Section</b>	<b>Ecological Subsection</b>	<b>Percent of Roadless Area</b>
Inside Passage Fjordlands	Etolin Granitics	43%
	Stikine Strait Complex	34%
	Clarence Strait Volcanics	23%

**(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 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 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 1,873 acres) dominates above 2,500 feet in elevation. A few poorly-drained areas between hills are generally covered with muskeg and scrub lodgepole pine. Steeper, more-well-drained hillsides support heavy stands of Sitka spruce, western hemlock, redcedar, and Alaska-cedar.

There are approximately 52,064 acres mapped as forest land, of which 26,656 acres or 51 percent are mapped as productive old-growth forest. Of the productive old growth, approximately 9,140 acres or 34 percent are mapped as high-volume, old-growth forest. The productive old growth includes about 1,103 acres of high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. The area also includes approximately 438 of second growth where timber harvest, mostly beach harvest, has occurred.

**(d) Fish Resources:** Fish species in this area include pink, chum, coho, and sockeye salmon, steelhead and cutthroat trout, and Dolly Varden char. King salmon, silver salmon, and halibut have been identified near the Steamer Bay Cabin, which is located in the northwest part of the area. Logjam, Porcupine, Pump, and Navy Creeks have been identified as some of the highest quality fish habitat in the Wrangell Ranger District. Navy and Porcupine creeks are entirely located within the area. Logjam and Pump creeks partially flow through the area.

**(e) Wildlife Resources:** Important species include Sitka black-tailed deer, wolves, black bear, and elk. The elk were introduced on the island in 1986 as a cooperative project. Other species recorded on Etolin Island include porcupine, river otter, beaver, moose, brown bear, pine marten, bald eagle, marbled murrelet, red-tailed hawk, and Canada goose.

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

<b>LUD</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Modified Landscape	16,921
Timber Production	7,513
Scenic Viewshed	6,942
Old-growth Habitat	23,913
Semi-remote Recreation	1,468

Approximately 55 percent of the roadless area was allocated to a development LUD, which allows timber production and road construction (Modified Landscape, Timber Production, and Scenic Viewshed). The Modified Landscape LUD was assigned to approximately 30 percent of the roadless area. Approximately 13 percent of the roadless area was allocated to the Timber Production LUD. The Scenic Viewshed was allocated to approximately 12 percent of the roadless area.

Approximately 45 percent of the roadless area was allocated to a non-development LUD, which are classified as unsuitable for timber production (Old-growth Habitat, Semi-remote Recreation). Lands allocated to the Old-Growth LUD account for approximately 42 percent of the roadless area. The Semi-remote Recreation LUD was assigned to approximately 3 percent of the roadless area.

Beach logging has occurred at scattered locations in the area, primarily in relatively isolated patches along Mosman and Burnett inlets. Small areas have also been logged at the head of Cooney Cove and on Mosman Island.

The saltwater bodies surrounding the island receive moderately heavy use by commercial and pleasure boats. The shoreline and bays receive light recreation use. There is subsistence use in the area. Steamer Bay Cabin is located in the northwest part of the roadless area. Other facilities located within or immediately adjacent to this area include a fish hatchery, oyster farm, electronic sites, shelter cabin, a fish pass, a research cabin, a fish weir, an abandoned lighthouse and abandoned building materials associated with historic fish traps and fur farms.

**(6) Appearance (Apparent Naturalness):** Overall, the roadless area has moderately high scenic quality with a mostly natural appearing landscape. Exceptions include the recreation cabin and other improvements mentioned above, as well as the beach-logged areas. The area is bounded inland on the north side by timber harvest areas. A person in a boat approaching the roadless area would generally see natural scenery. The area is visible from boats traveling on Clarence Strait and Ernest Sound.

**(7) Surroundings (External Influences):** The area is centrally located in the western portion of Etolin Island. Adjacent land uses include the South Etolin Roadless Area and the South Etolin Wilderness. Boats traveling on the adjacent saltwaters may be visible from within parts of the area but usually are not intrusive. It is possible to see timber harvest and roads from some northern locations within this roadless area. This is especially the case with the north portion of the middle lobe of the roadless area, and to a lesser degree for northern portion of the western lobe. There is some developed area along the northern tip of the eastern lobe as well, but is less intrusive. The Alaska Marine Highway passes within 2 miles along the west side of the roadless area.

**(8) Attractions and Features of Special Interest:** The landform variety, including subalpine peaks, stream drainages and lakes, is an attraction. The bays provide sheltered moorages and a sense of remoteness. The elk population is unique to Alaska. Steamer Bay Cabin is located in the northwest part of the roadless area. The area contains 15 inventoried recreation places, which cover 9,484 acres, or 17 percent of the roadless area.

**(9) Differences between the 1989 and 2003 Roadless Area Boundary:** The boundaries of this area have changed slightly as a result of additional timber harvest and road building on the north side of the area. In addition, a very small beach-logged area north of Cooney Cove that was excluded from the 1989 roadless area is included within the boundaries of the 2003 area.

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

**(1) Natural Integrity and Apparent Naturalness:** Within the roadless area, the natural integrity is mostly unmodified (93 percent). Exceptions include the recreation cabin and other improvements mentioned above, as well as the beach-logged areas. Despite these modifications and the timber harvest activities that dominate the north

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boundary, the majority of the area appears to be natural and appropriate for wilderness classification. The presence of elk, which are a non-native species, affects the natural integrity of the area.

**(2) Opportunity for Solitude and Serenity, Self-reliance, Adventure, Challenging Experiences, and Primitive Recreation:** There is a high opportunity for solitude and primitive recreation within the area away from improvements and facilities. There is a hatchery manager and crew that live and work at the Burnett Fish Hatchery, and an oyster farmer that lives near the south end of Mosman Inlet. Present recreation use levels are low except at the mouths of some streams and at the Steamer Bay Cabin. One outfitter/guide reported using the area in 2000 for a total of 4 service days.

Generally, a person camped or traveling inland is unlikely to see others. Low-flying aircraft may, at times, pass over, and the State ferry and boaters may pass next to the roadless area, but all are generally non-intrusive. The character of the area generally allows the visitor to feel remote from the sights and sounds of human activity. The long bays that extend into the area provide access to portions of the interior, as well as protect users from the open waters and the traffic of Clarence Strait.

Travel within the area is challenging, requiring a high degree of woods skills and experience. 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 (especially around salmon streams in the fall) 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)	6,980	12%
Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized (SPNM)	23,258	41%
Semi-Primitive Motorized (SPM)	22,493	40%
Roaded Modified (RM)	4,025	7%

The area contains 15 inventoried recreation places, which cover 9,484 acres, or 17 percent of the roadless area.

ROS Class	# of Rec. Places*	Total Acres
P	0	0
SPNM	1	719
SPM	12	8,083
RM	5	683

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

The area is accessible by boat from the community of Wrangell in less than 2 hours, and from Ketchikan in approximately 7 hours.

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

The inventoried roadless areas of the Tongass National Forest were rated according to this system in 1989 for the Analysis of the Management Situation developed in support of the Forest Plan Revision. At that time, the Mosman Roadless Area was given a rating of 24 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 better reflects the effects of adjacent developments and activities on the wilderness attributes of the area. Each of the three lobes of the roadless area was rated separately. The eastern lobe that is adjacent to the South Etolin Island Wilderness was given a score of 24; the middle lobe, which is relatively small and notably influenced by developments in the north, was given a score of 19; and the western lobe given a score of 23.

**(4) Ecologic and Geologic Values:** With the exceptions of the higher elevations of the Keating Range and Steamer Knoll, the majority of the area is forested. Areas of higher and lower volume old growth tend to be concentrated on the lower elevation areas along the shorelines.

**(a) Fish Resources:** The Tongass Fish and Wildlife Resource Assessment (ADF&G, 1998) listed VCU 468 surrounding Burnett Inlet as a primary salmon producer. No VCUs were listed as primary sport fish producers.

Fish species in this area include pink, chum, coho, and sockeye salmon, steelhead and cutthroat trout, and Dolly Varden char (USDA Forest Service, 1991). King salmon, silver salmon, and halibut have been identified near the Steamer Bay Cabin, which is located in the northwest part of the area. Logjam, Porcupine, Pump, and Navy Creeks have been identified as some of the highest quality fish habitat in the Wrangell Ranger District. Navy and Porcupine creeks are entirely located within the area. Logjam and Pump creeks partially flow through the area. A salmon hatchery operated by the Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association at the mouth of Burnett River, also contributes to the salmon fishery producing pink, chum, and more recently, chinook salmon.

Porcupine Creek has high sport fish value (of regional significance) for cutthroat trout, steelhead, and Dolly Varden. The creek has a good coho salmon run and a pink salmon escapement that averages 6,500 fish. A steppass is located in the lower reach of Navy Creek.

**(b) Wildlife Resources:** Important species include Sitka black-tailed deer, wolves, black bear, and elk. Elk were introduced on the island in 1986 as a cooperative project. A grass flat at the mouth of Porcupine Creek provides habitat for black bears. Other species recorded on Etolin Island include river otter, beaver, pine marten, moose, brown bear, bald eagle, marbled murrelet, red-tailed hawk, and Canada goose. There are 44 documented eagle nest trees in this area. VCU 467 has the second highest carrying capacity for black bear and marten on Etolin Island, as well as the third highest carrying capacity for otter and Sitka black-tailed deer.

**(c) Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species:** The only federally listed threatened and endangered species likely to occur within or adjacent to the roadless area are the humpback whale (endangered) and the Steller sea lion (threatened). Both of these species are found in adjacent marine waters. Four Forest Service Region 10 Sensitive Species are suspected or known to occur within the area: the trumpeter swan, osprey, Peale's peregrine falcon, and the Queen Charlotte goshawk. Trumpeter swans nest in the lowlands on small lakes and along major rivers and winter in ice-free areas throughout the Tongass. Present from April through September, ospreys are rare in Southeast Alaska where they reach the northern extent of their nesting range. Feeding almost exclusively on fish, ospreys typically nest in large snags near lakes or the coast where fish are abundant. Peale's peregrine falcons nest on cliff faces and islands and feed primarily on seabirds. Inhabitants of late seral forests, Queen Charlotte goshawks are closely associated with productive old growth. 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 is a small area of karst (limestone) adjacent to the northwest portion of the roadless area, in the vicinity of Kindergarten Bay. There are no known karst features in the roadless area. There are no glaciers or unique geologic features.

**(5) Scientific and Educational Values:** There are opportunities to observe a variety of ecological and landform settings. The Steamer Bay Cabin facilitates recreation activities in the area. Elk are also a unique attraction. The area is located approximately 25 miles south of the city of Wrangell.

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**(6) Scenic Values:** Overall, the area has moderately high scenic quality with a mostly natural appearing landscape. Exceptions include the recreation cabin and other improvements, as well as the beach-logged areas. There is much landscape variety as some of the mountains that characterize the area are gentle, while others, such as the Keating Range, rise steeply. The area generally appears to be a remote and unmodified landscape when viewed from the Visual Priority Routes and Use areas identified below. Some roads and timber harvest activity can be seen from northern parts of the area.

Visual Priority Routes and Use Areas identified by the Forest Plan that are within or adjacent to the area include Clarence Strait, which is part of the Alaska Marine Highway and used by tour ships. Mosman and Burnett inlets are identified as Other Marine Travel Routes. Steamer Bay and Johnson Cove are identified as Saltwater Use Areas and Boat Anchorages. Burnett Inlet is identified as a Saltwater Use Area. The Steamer Bay Forest Service cabin is also identified as a visual priority use area.

About 30 percent of this roadless area is inventoried as Variety Class A (possessing landscape diversity that is unique for the character type). Much of the area, 54 percent, is inventoried as Variety Class B (possessing landscape diversity that is common for the character type) and 13 percent is inventoried as Variety Class C (possessing a low degree of landscape diversity). Approximately 3 percent of the area was not inventoried.

The majority of this roadless area, 90 percent, has an Existing Visual Condition (EVC) Type I, where only ecological change has occurred to the landscape. One percent of this roadless area is EVC Type III, where changes in the landscape are noticed by the average forest visitor. The natural appearance of the landscape remains dominant. About 7 percent has an EVC Type V, where changes in the landscape are obvious to the average person, and appear to be major disturbances. Approximately 3 percent of the area was not inventoried.

**(7) Social, Cultural, and Historical Values:** This area was claimed by several Stikine Tlingit clans during prehistoric times. Evidence includes the remains of villages, fish camps, fish weirs, petroglyphs, and bark-stripped trees. Evidence of historic use includes fox farms, trapping cabins, homesteads, canneries, and temporary camps. Goldschmidt and Haas' (1946) mapping project identified former camps or smokehouses around the shoreline of this area. They also identified a cemetery near Cooney Cove and commercial fish traps on the west shoreline of the area. The area is located approximately 22 miles south of the city of Wrangell.

Present recreation use levels are low except at the mouths of some streams and at the Steamer Bay Cabin. One outfitter/guide reported using the area in 2000 for a total of 4 service days. There is subsistence use in the area. The Wildlife Analysis Area that includes this roadless area accounted for 1 to 3 percent of annual average Wrangell deer harvest during 1987 to 1994. The VCUs in this area were not included among the highest value community use areas in the Tongass Fish and Wildlife Resource Assessment. However, VCU 468, surrounding Burnett Inlet, was included in the second most important group and VCU 467 surrounding Mosman Inlet was included in the third most important group. None of the VCUs were listed among the VCUs with the highest sensitivity to disturbance of subsistence areas (ADF&G, 1998).

**(8) Manageability as Wilderness and Boundary Conditions/Changes:** The area is well defined by saltwater on the west and south. The northern boundary is defined by flat land running east to west, which contains developments. The eastern boundary is defined by a drainage break of the mountains, which separates this area from the South Etolin Roadless Area. Feasibility of managing the northern portion of this area in a roadless condition is moderate, and is high in the rest of the area. Road construction and timber harvest activities have separated the Mosman Roadless Area into three discrete areas separated from one another by Burnett and Mosman Inlets. This separation would prevent the area from being one coherent wilderness unit. The eastern portion adjacent to the South Etolin Island Wilderness could be managed with the Wilderness.

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

**(1) Recreation, Including Tourism Potential:** There is potential for additional outfitter and guide permits, developed trails, and cabins or shelters. Elk hunting was initiated in 1997 and continues to be administered by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game through a drawing permit system. In 1996, the Alaska Visitors Association

proposed a recreation development in Rocky Bay consisting of hut-to-hut hiking for 25 people a day and an equipment storage facility of 1,000 cubic feet.

- (2) **Subsistence Uses:** The existing patterns of subsistence activities in the area would not be affected by wilderness designation.
- (3) **Fish Resources:** There are both existing and potential fish enhancement projects in this area. Existing projects include the Denil steppass installed in the lower reach of Navy Creek in 1975 and the fish hatchery constructed in 1978 at the mouth of Burnett River and operated by the Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association. Potential enhancement projects include the lowermost 1,000 feet of Wetbeck and Detailer Creeks, which are channel types that have a moderate-to-high probability of responding to rehabilitation treatments such as alder canopy thinning and rearing habitat structure insertion. Other enhancement plans for coho smolt habitat could include rejuvenating old beaver ponds by creating artificial dams and/or planting hardwood forage.
- (4) **Wildlife Resources:** There is the potential for deer habitat improvement projects and elk enhancement projects may surface in the future.
- (5) **Timber Resources:** There are approximately 26,656 acres mapped as productive old growth in the roadless area. In addition, there are approximately 438 acres of second growth due to timber harvest. Of these acres, 20,326 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), 5,576 acres or 10 percent of this roadless area are estimated to be suitable for timber production. Approximately 2,227 of the suitable acres are mapped as high-volume old growth; of these acres, 496 are mapped as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. Some areas are highly prone to strong winds which blow down standing timber left exposed when adjacent stands are cut.  
  
The potential for managing timber in this roadless area is moderate, as roads could be extended from the existing system and much of the area could be logged without constructing additional log transfer facilities. Some portions of the roadless area may require new log transfer facilities and roads to manage timber economically. The area is included, along with Roadless Area 234, in the potential Navy timber sale, which is identified in the current Tongass National Forest 10-year action plan for harvest in 2006, 2008, and 2009.
- (6) **Fire, Insects, and Disease:** The area has no significant fire history. Endemic tree diseases common to Southeast Alaska are present; there are no known epidemic disease occurrences.
- (7) **Minerals:** The U.S. Bureau of Land Management lists Porcupine Creek as having potential for mineral extraction, but this is an expired prospect claim. There are no valid claims within the river corridor or on adjacent lands. The roadless area contains an estimated 35,767 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 known transportation or utility corridors planned for this area except potential roads associated with timber management within the LUDs that allow such activity.
- (9) **Water Availability and Use:** The Burnett Inlet Fish Hatchery, Mosman Oyster Farm, and the recreation cabin create the water demand in the area. The Burnett Inlet Fish Hatchery operates a FERC-licensed hydroelectric project and gets its water supply from Burnett Lake.
- (10) **Areas of Scientific Interest:** The area contains no Research Natural Areas and has not been identified for any other scientific value.
- (11) **Land Use Authorizations:** There are five special use authorizations within the roadless area which include an oyster farm, a communication site (on the mountain between Burnett Inlet and Olive Cove), a fish hatchery, a hydroelectric plant, and a hatchery manager's residence. A permit for a new oyster farm is pending. This area also has one reservation for a lighthouse.
- (12) **Land Status:** All National Forest System land is within the roadless area.

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

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

**(a) Interest Expressed by Local Users and Residents:** The area is primarily used for recreational purposes by the citizens of Wrangell. There has been no formal support for or opposition to maintaining this area in a roadless condition. The elk transplants have generally been supported.

**(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 Mosman Roadless Area. In 2001, HR 2908 identified the Mosman Roadless Area as a proposed Wilderness Addition.

**(c) Public Input During Forest Plan Revision and Appeals:** A number of comments recommended that the area be designated as the Semi-Primitive Recreation or Primitive Recreation LUD. Burnett Inlet, Mosman Cove, Rocky Bay, and Steamer Bay were specifically addressed in public input during the Forest Plan revision and appeals. In addition, one comment addressed the area as Roadless Area 233. Burnett Inlet, Mosman Cove, and Steamer Bay were identified as areas that should be managed under the Semi-Primitive LUD to protect anchorages and undeveloped recreation. The Alaska Visitors Association proposed a recreation development in Rocky Bay consisting of hut-to-hut hiking for 25 people a day and an equipment storage facility of 1,000 cubic feet. The Wrangell Resource Council commented that unfragmented old growth on Etolin Island should be protected for wildlife, subsistence, and sport hunting.

Timber industry comments recommended that Management Area S23, which includes the South Etolin Roadless Area, be allocated to the Timber Production LUD. Other timber industry comments recommended that, with the exception of some Scenic Viewshed or Modified Landscape along the ferry route, all of Management Area S23 should be allocated to the Timber Production LUD to keep timber harvest economical in these already-developed areas.

Porcupine Creek was identified in the September 25, 1997 appeal filed by the Narrows Conservation Coalition as an area of particular concern to the people in the Stikine area that was left unprotected by the 1997 Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan.

**(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:** Public comments received on the Starfish Timber Sale EIS specifically addressed the proposed sale that has since taken place. General concerns were expressed with respect to the potential effects of the proposed sale upon wildlife habitat (USDA Forest Service, 1991).

**(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. They indicated that protection of this area, in combination with the South Etolin (#234) Roadless Area and South Etolin Wilderness Area, would conserve valuable remaining undisturbed forested habitats on the island.

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 the Mosman and South Etolin roadless areas for wilderness designation and to be added to the South Etolin Wilderness.

Some individuals recommended this area for permanent protection as wilderness.

**(2) Nearby Roadless and Wilderness Areas and Uses:** The South Etolin Roadless Area is located immediately to the east. A drainage break between mountains separates the two areas. The North Etolin Roadless Area, located to the north, is separated from the Mosman Roadless Area by a valley and roaded area. Additional roadless areas are located nearby, across narrow saltwater channels, and include the Kashevarof Islands and South Zarembo Roadless Areas. The nearest wilderness is the South Etolin Wilderness, which forms part of the Mosman Roadless Area’s south and east boundaries.

**(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)	55	60
Wrangell (Pop. 2,308)	25	30
Petersburg (Pop. 3,224)	45	55
Juneau (Pop. 30,711)	160	175

Wrangell is the nearest stop on the Alaska Marine Highway.

**(4) Relative Contribution to the National Wilderness Preservation System:** The Mosman Roadless Area is located in the central-western portion of Etolin Island. It is composed of three lobes, separated by Mosman and Burnett Inlets. It is bounded by Clarence Strait on the west and a portion of the south, the South Etolin Roadless Area on the east, the South Etolin Wilderness on a portion of the south and east, Ernest Sound to the south, and an area of roads and harvest units to the north. The roadless area is generally characterized by a series of mountains oriented nearly in a north-south alignment, separated by the long, narrow waterways of Mosman and Burnett Inlets. There is much landform variety as some of the mountains are gentle, while others, such as the Keating Range, rise steeply. The highest peaks attain elevations of about 3,000 feet. Numerous short streams drain the area. Several lakes exist in the area, the major ones being Streets Lake to the west, and Navy and Burnett Lakes on the east side of the roadless area.

The area is mostly natural appearing; however, it is influenced by developments along its northern boundary. The natural integrity is high and the apparent naturalness is very high for the overall area. When rated separately, the eastern portion has very high natural integrity and outstanding apparent naturalness. The middle portion is more influenced by adjacent activities and has high natural integrity and apparent naturalness. The western portion has very high natural integrity and apparent naturalness. The opportunity for solitude is high and the opportunity for primitive recreation is very high for the area.

Approximately 30 percent of the landscape is considered distinctive for the character type from a scenery standpoint. The landform variety, including subalpine peaks, stream drainages and lakes, is an attraction. The introduced elk population is unique to Southeast Alaska, but is not a valuable attribute for wilderness.

The roadless area includes about 9,140 acres of high-volume, old-growth forest. Of these acres, 1,103 are mapped as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth.

The Mosman Roadless Area is classified as being in the Etolin Island and Vicinity Biogeographic Province and makes up about 11 percent of the province. It is one of 14 inventoried roadless areas found within the province that collectively make up about 54 percent of the province. The South Etolin Wilderness is located in this province and makes up about 16 percent of the province.

The Mosman Roadless Area lies completely within the Inside Passage Fjordlands Ecological Section and represents 2 percent of the ecological section. Approximately 20 percent of the Inside Passage Fjordlands Ecological Section is in existing wilderness, 2 percent is in existing LUD II, and 30 percent is protected by other existing non-development LUDs.

## Appendix C

The largest portion (43 percent) of the roadless area is in the Etolin Granitics Ecological Subsection; this portion of the roadless area represents 28 percent of the entire ecological subsection; of which, 37 percent is protected in existing wilderness and 19 percent in other non-development LUDs. One-third (34 percent) of the roadless area is in the Stikine Strait Complex Ecological Subsection; this portion of the roadless area represents 30 percent of the entire ecological subsection, 42 percent of which is protected by existing non-development LUDs. The remaining 23 percent of the roadless area is in the Clarence Strait Volcanics Ecological Subsection; this portion of the roadless area represents 5 percent of the entire ecological subsection, 15 percent of which is protected in existing wilderness and 34 percent in other non-development LUDs.

The Mosman 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. The eastern portion of the roadless area was rated separately and received a score of 24; the middle portion rated 21; and the western portion rated 23.

There is considerable local and national support for managing the area in an unroaded condition, and some support for designation of the area as wilderness. Designation would create a wilderness with relatively good scenic values and that could extend the South Etolin Wilderness to the west. Designation of the area would also add Congressional protection to approximately 30 percent of the Stikine Strait Complex Ecological Subsection that is not currently represented in wilderness or LUD II. 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 Mosman Roadless Area would be managed under the existing Forest Plan if Alternative 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 is implemented. Approximately 45 percent of the roadless area would be managed under non-development LUDs. Timber harvest and road development could occur in the remaining 55 percent. The land in the development LUDs provides an estimated 5,576 acres that are suitable for timber production (6 percent of the suitable acres on the Wrangell Ranger District). Approximately 496 of the suitable acres are classified as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. The roadless area contains an estimated 35,767 acres of undiscovered locatable mineral resources; all of the acres are considered to have low potential for development. The timber sales, recreation, minerals, and special use programs would continue. The values associated with the natural settings of the roadless area, including some of the scenic values, could be affected by ongoing developments allowed by the Forest Plan.

Under Alternative 6, 7, or 8, the entire roadless area would be converted to Recommended Wilderness. No timber harvest would be allowed and the ongoing recreation, minerals, and special use programs could be restricted. Mineral prospecting would be allowed up to the time that the area is actually designated as wilderness by Congress. The values associated with the natural settings of the roadless area, including the high scenic values, would be provided long-term protection if designated wilderness. Designation of the area would add Congressional protection to approximately 30 percent of the Stikine Strait Complex Ecological Subsection that is not currently represented in wilderness or LUD II. Designation of the area to wilderness would extend the South Etolin Island Wilderness to the west and across the southern end of the island.

## Appendix C

Land Use Designation Allocations and Suitable Timber Lands by Alternative for Roadless Area 233 (in acres)								
Land Use Designation	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7	Alt 8
Recommended Wilderness						56,757	56,757	56,757
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	23,913	23,913	23,913	23,913	23,913			
Semi-remote Recreation	1,468	1,468	1,468	1,468	1,468			
Recommended LUD II								
LUD II								
Wild, Scenic, Recreational River								
Experimental Forest								
Scenic Viewshed	6,942	6,942	6,942	6,942	6,942			
Modified Landscape	16,921	16,921	16,921	16,921	16,921			
Timber Production	7,513	7,513	7,513	7,513	7,513			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>56,757</b>	<b>56,757</b>	<b>56,757</b>	<b>56,757</b>	<b>56,757</b>	<b>56,757</b>	<b>56,757</b>	<b>56,757</b>
Suitable Timber Lands	5,576	5,576	5,576	5,576	5,576	0	0	0