

# Appendix C

## INDIVIDUAL ROADLESS AREA DESCRIPTION

**ROADLESS AREA NAME:** Central Wrangell (289)

**ACRES (NFS):** 15,210

**BIOGEOGRAPHIC PROVINCE:** Etolin Island and Vicinity

**ECOLOGICAL SECTION:** Inside Passage Fjordlands

**2003 WILDERNESS ATTRIBUTE RATING:** 16

### I. Overview and Description

(1) **Location and Access:** The area is centrally located on south Wrangell Island, approximately 10 miles south of the city of Wrangell, which is served by the Alaska Marine Highway and jet service. The area is bordered to the north, east, west, and part of the south by forest roads and harvest areas. The area is partially bordered to the southwest by Thoms Lake and the surrounding area, which is owned by the state. The area is accessible from nearby forest roads and Thoms Lake. There are no sites suitable for landing wheeled aircraft. Access into the interior is by foot or helicopter.

(2) **History:** The Tlingit inhabited this area in prehistoric and historic times. While the area has likely been prospected for minerals, there are no known mining claims.

(3) **Geography and Topography:** The area is generally characterized by moderately diverse, rounded to occasionally blocky terrain, with mountains reaching elevations of over 2,000 feet. The tallest is approximately 2,650 feet in elevation. Between the mountains are several U-shaped valleys containing streams. Freshwater lakes cover about 108 acres. With the exception of the portion bounded by Thoms Lake, the area is entirely bounded by forest roads and associated timber management areas. There are no miles of saltwater shoreline and no ice, alpine, or rock features mapped in the 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 Central Wrangell Roadless Area is contained entirely within the Inside Passage Fjordlands Ecological Section (M247E), Zimovia Strait Complex Ecological Subsection (see table below). Stratified sedimentary rock and volcanic intrusions lie beneath broad glacial valleys and rounded hills. Roughly half of the Zimovia Strait Complex Ecological Subsection includes mineral soils supporting productive hemlock forests with occasional stands of cedar or Sitka spruce (Nowacki et al., 2001).

<b>Ecological Section</b>	<b>Ecological Subsection</b>	<b>Percent of Roadless Area</b>
Inside Passage Fjordlands	Zimovia Strait Complex	100%

(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.

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 extremely shallow and rocky soils.

**(c) Vegetation:** Alpine vegetation dominates above 2,500 feet elevation. The valley floors and poorly drained areas between hills are generally covered with muskeg and scrub lodgepole pine. Less than 100 acres of muskeg are mapped for the area; however, due to their small size and association with forested sites, accurate acreage estimates are difficult. Steeper, more-well-drained hillsides support heavy stands of Sitka spruce, western hemlock, red cedar, and Alaska-cedar.

There are approximately 14,847 acres mapped as forested land, of which 6,887 acres (46 percent) are mapped as productive old-growth forest. Of the productive old growth, 2,494 acres (36 percent) are mapped as high-volume, old-growth forest. The productive old growth includes about 247 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 species on the island include steelhead, rainbow, and native cutthroat trout; Dolly Varden char; chum, pink, coho, and sockeye salmon (USDA Forest Service, 1998). Thoms Creek and Fools Creek are substantial producers of salmon; portions of these watersheds are within the Central Wrangell Roadless Area.

**(e) Wildlife Resources:** Important species include Sitka black-tailed deer, wolves, black bear, pine marten, and small populations of brown bear and moose.

**(5) Management Direction and Current Uses:** The area was allocated to two Land Use Designations (LUDs) under the 1997 Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan. These two LUDs are Scenic Viewshed and Old-growth Habitat.

LUD	Acres
Timber Production	7,291
Old-growth Habitat	7,919

Approximately 48 percent of the roadless area was allocated to one development LUD, Timber Production. This LUD is located primarily in the eastern half of the roadless area.

Approximately 52 percent of the roadless area was allocated to one non-development LUD, Old-growth Habitat. This LUD is located primarily on the western half of the area.

Present recreation use levels are relatively low, except at streams and lakes near the roads, and occasionally at the mouths of some streams. Both the Thoms Lake and Long Lake Trails extend into the area and there is a shelter at the northwest end of Long Lake. The Wildlife Analysis Area that includes this roadless area accounted for 5 to 10 percent of annual average Wrangell deer harvest during 1987 to 1994.

This area includes the Little Foot and Shady timber sale project areas proposed in the 1998 Wrangell Island Analysis (USDA Forest Service, 1998). The Tongass National Forest 10-year action plan includes the Shady/Highbush project, which includes the northern and eastern portion of the roadless area and is scheduled for 2004.

**(6) Appearance (Apparent Naturalness):** Overall, the area has high scenic quality with a natural appearing landscape. The area is mainly visible from the surrounding roadless areas, forest roads, Thoms Lake recreation area, and limited viewing points on Zimovia Strait and Blake Channel.

**(7) Surroundings (External Influences):** The area is centrally located on the south end of Wrangell Island. The area is bordered to the north, east, west, and part of the south by forest roads and forest management areas. The area is partially bordered to the southwest by Thoms Lake and the surrounding area is owned by the state. It is

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possible to see harvested areas from some locations within this roadless area. Timber sales are planned for portions of the roadless areas surrounding the Central Wrangell Roadless Area (USDA Forest Service, 2001).

**(8) Attractions and Features of Special Interest:** The area contains 10 inventoried recreation places, which cover 2,853 acres (19 percent) of the roadless area. There are no unique or special features in this area. Both the Thoms Lake and Long Lake Trails extend into the area.

**(9) Differences between the 1989 and 2003 Roadless Area Boundary:** The Central Wrangell Roadless Area did not exist in 1989. At that time, it was part of the South Wrangell Roadless Area. Development activities between 1989 and 1996 separated the 1989 South Wrangell Roadless Area into five separate roadless areas. Several smaller areas have been excluded near the developed boundaries between the Draft and Final SEIS to improve manageability in those areas.

### II. Capability of Management as Wilderness

**(1) Natural Integrity and Apparent Naturalness:** The area is essentially unmodified. Approximately 88 percent of the area is natural appearing, where only ecological and geological change has occurred. The area is, however, almost completely surrounded by forest roads and harvested areas. These developed areas are visible from many parts of the roadless area. A portion of the Thoms Lake boardwalk trail passes through the western edge of the roadless area. The Long Lake boardwalk trail, 3-sided shelter, picnic table, and outhouse are located in the eastern portion of the roadless area.

**(2) Opportunity for Solitude and Serenity, Self-reliance, Adventure, Challenging Experiences, and Primitive Recreation:** There is a moderate opportunity for solitude within the area, especially after one has gone a short distance from the roads. Present recreation use levels are low except at streams and lakes near the roads, along the trails, at the Long Lake shelter, and occasionally at the mouths of some streams. Generally, a person camping or traveling inland is likely to see others only occasionally.

Travel within the area is not especially challenging, requiring only moderate woods skills and experience. The presence of both black and brown bears, especially around salmon streams in the fall, does present a degree of challenge and a need for caution.

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
Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized (SPNM)	9,184	60%
Semi-Primitive Motorized (SPM)	3,313	22%
Roaded Natural (RN)	28	0%
Roaded Modified (RM)	2,685	18%

The area contains 10 inventoried recreation places, which cover 2,853 acres (19 percent) of the roadless area.

ROS Class	# of Rec. Places*	Total Acres
SPNM	0	0
SPM	3	1,008
RN	2	28
RM	8	1,817

\* 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 road from the community of Wrangell in less than 1 hour and by boat from Ketchikan in approximately 7 hours. Both the Thoms Lake and Long Lake Trails extend into the area and there is a shelter at the northwest end of Long Lake.

**(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 South Wrangell Roadless Area was given a rating of 20 out of 28 possible points; the Central Wrangell Roadless Area represented only a portion of this area. The rating was redone for this updated version of the Analysis of the Management Situation. Based on this evaluation, the Central Wrangell Roadless Area was given a rating of 16. This rating reflects the developments on adjacent lands and their effects on wilderness attributes of this area.

**(4) Ecologic and Geologic Values:** The majority of the roadless area is forested. There are no known unique features in the area.

**(a) Fish Resources:** VCU 479, along the coast on Zimovia Strait, was listed as a primary sport fish producer, but none of the three VCUs were listed as primary salmon producers (ADF&G, 1998).

Several Class 1 and 2 streams run through the roadless area. Fish species on the island include steelhead, rainbow, and native cutthroat trout; Dolly Varden char; and chum, pink, coho, and sockeye salmon (USDA Forest Service, 1998). The area includes a very small stretch of Thoms Creek, which is the most productive fishery on Wrangell Island, providing a diversity of lake, stream, and estuary habitats, and supporting an important subsistence sockeye fishery. (However, the May 2000 Wrangell Island Road Guide identifies the part of the roadless area that includes this stretch as state-selected land that have not been conveyed yet).

**(b) Wildlife Resources:** This area contains habitat for black bear, Sitka black-tailed deer, moose, and wolves. Wrangell Island is also known to support brown bears, unlike many of the outer coast islands. Mountain lions, marten, and wolverine have also been reported on the island. Mountain goats have not been reported here. Wrangell Island also supports an endemic species and the Wrangell red-backed vole. According to the Wrangell Island Analysis Report (USDA Forest Service, 1998), introduced elk from Etolin Island may be colonizing the area.

The area generally contains low value deer winter range, with the exception of a few small blocks of moderate winter deer habitat within the Thoms Old Growth Reserve. Important marten habitat occurs along the beach and Fools Creek. Eagles, goshawks, and red-tailed hawks have been observed in the general area.

**(c) Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive 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 within or adjoining the Central Wrangell Roadless Area. Four Forest Service Region 10 Sensitive Species are suspected or known to occur within the area, including 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 are no known karst and cave resources in the area.

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(5) **Scientific and Educational Values:** There are opportunities to observe and study fish and wildlife and the various forces that formed the landscape. The area is located within a 1-hour drive of the city of Wrangell and is, therefore, relatively accessible to school-age children.

(6) **Scenic Values:** The majority of the area appears unmodified. The areas of development that bound the majority of the area are visible from some parts of the roadless area. Overall, the area has high scenic quality with a natural appearing landscape. The area is mainly visible from the surrounding roadless areas, forest roads, Thoms Lake recreation area, and limited viewing points on Zimovia Strait and Blake Channel.

Visual Priority Routes and Use Areas identified by the Forest Plan, which are adjacent to the area, include Fools Inlet (#6270), Thoms Lake Access (#6290), and Thoms Creek Crossing. They are all identified as Public Use Roads and form the east, south, and north boundaries of the area, respectively.

About 36 percent of the area is inventoried as Variety Class B (possessing landscape diversity that is common for the character type). Most of the area, approximately 64 percent, is in Variety Class C (possessing a low degree of landscape diversity).

The majority of this roadless area, approximately 77 percent, has an Existing Visual Condition (EVC) Type I, where only ecological change has occurred to the landscape. Two percent of the area is EVC Type III, where changes in the landscape are noticed by the average forest visitor, but the natural appearance of the landscape remains dominant. Approximately 9 percent of the area is in EVC Type IV, where changes in the landscape are easily noticed by the average person and may attract some attention. About 13 percent is in EVC Type V, where changes in the landscape are obvious to the average person, and appear to be major disturbances.

(7) **Social, Cultural, and Historical Values:** The area was inhabited by the Tlingit in prehistoric and historic times. The area is accessible by automobile from the community of Wrangell. Present recreation use levels are low, except at streams and lakes near the roads, along the trails, at the Long Lake shelter, and occasionally at the mouths of some streams. The Wildlife Analysis Area that includes this roadless area accounted for 5 to 10 percent of annual average Wrangell deer harvest during 1987 to 1994. There is some subsistence use in the area. None of the VCUs were listed among the VCUs with the highest community use value, but all three 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 bordered to the north, east, south, and part of the west by forest roads and harvest areas. The area is partially bordered to the west by Thoms Lake and the surrounding area owned by the state. The boundary formed by the state land is a series of straight lines that do not reflect the underlying topography or geographic features; however, this state land is unroaded. This relatively small area is poorly suited for wilderness management.

South Wrangell Island was mainly allocated to the Timber Production and Old-growth Habitat LUDs, with relatively small areas allocated to the Scenic Viewshed LUD. The roaded area northwest of the Central Wrangell Roadless Area was mainly allocated to the Modified Landscape LUD, which provides for natural-appearing landscapes while allowing timber harvest.

### **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 and for developed trails and cabins or shelters.

(2) **Subsistence Uses:** 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:** As identified in the Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan, amended 1985-86, there are opportunities for moose habitat improvement projects in the area. These projects typically consist of browse enhancement involving seeding, planting, and releasing.
- (5) **Timber Resources:** There are approximately 6,887 acres mapped as productive old growth and no acres mapped as second growth due to harvest in the roadless area. Of these acres, 4,090 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), 1,326 acres or 9 percent of this roadless area are estimated to be suitable for timber production. Approximately 580 of the suitable acres are mapped as high-volume old growth; of these acres, 41 are mapped as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. Some areas are highly prone to strong winds which blow down standing timber left exposed by cutting adjacent stands. The potential for managing timber in this roadless area is high, as roads could be extended from the existing system and the area could be logged without constructing a camp or additional log transfer facilities.
- This area includes the Little Foot and Shady timber sale project areas proposed in the 1998 Wrangell Island Analysis (USDA Forest Service, 1998). The Tongass National Forest 10-year action plan includes the Shady/Highbush project, which includes the northern and eastern portion of the roadless area and is scheduled for 2004.
- (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 area generally has a low minerals rating and there are no known current claims.
- (8) **Transportation and Utilities:** The March 1999 Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan proposed implementation of a new shuttle-ferry and road system, referred to as the *Inside Passage Highway*, connecting Petersburg, Wrangell, and Ketchikan. Proposed road improvements on Wrangell Island include upgrading Forest Road 6265 and Fools Inlet Road, as well as constructing 3 miles of new roadway to a new ferry terminal at Fools Inlet. Forest Road 6265 and Fools Inlet Road form the east boundary of the Central Wrangell Roadless Area and any improvements would be visible from some locations within the area. There are no proposed transportation or utility corridors located within the area. There may be new roads proposed for timber management in LUDs that allow such activity.
- (9) **Water Availability and Use:** There are no existing or planned hydropower or domestic water projects in the area.
- (10) **Areas of Scientific Interest:** The area contains no Research Natural Areas and has not been identified for any other scientific value.
- (11) **Land Use Authorizations:** No special uses are authorized in this area.
- (12) **Land Status:** The entire roadless area is National Forest System land. This roadless area contains two areas of selected, or encumbered lands, located in the northern and southern tip of the roadless area.

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

- (1) **Public and Congressional Interest**
- (a) **Interest Expressed by Local Users and Residents:** There have been no local initiatives or public sentiment expressed to have the area remain roadless. There has been interest by some residents of Wrangell in developing additional roads in the unroaded portions of Wrangell Island to facilitate additional logging and roaded recreation opportunities (USDA Forest Service, 1990).
- (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 Central Wrangell Roadless 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. The

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roaded area between the Central Wrangell and South Wrangell Roadless Areas was also proposed as a Restoration Area.

**(c) Public Input During Forest Plan Revision and Appeals:** No specific recommendations were made for wilderness. The Southeast Alaska Conservation Council included South Wrangell Island in their 1991 list of areas that merited special management protection because of their outstanding wildlife, fisheries, hunting, fishing, subsistence, recreation, and tourism values.

The Wrangell Resource Council recommended that Wrangell Island be allocated to the Primitive Recreation LUD. Timber industry comments recommended that Management Area S25, which includes the South Wrangell 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 S25 should be allocated to the Timber Production LUD to keep timber harvest economic in these already developed areas.

**(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 land in the Tongass to be protected from development.

**(e) Public Input Expressed for Project-level EISs and Other Input:** Public comments summarized for Wrangell Island in the Wrangell Island Analysis (USDA Forest Service, 1998) did not include a desire by the public to have the area remain roadless or be designated wilderness. Many of the issues raised concerned recreation, with local residents citing the need for more hiking trails, winter recreation opportunities (snowmobiling and skiing), cabins, and shelters on the island, and recreational driving/camping opportunities. Some people would like to have primitive campsites designated near beaches around the island. This summary suggested that local residents generally consider timber and recreation to be compatible on Wrangell Island, with people generally wanting to keep logging roads open for public use. The summary also noted an increasing concern about the cumulative effects of timber harvest, road building, and recreation development on wildlife habitat (USDA Forest Service, 1998).

**(f) Public Input Expressed During Supplemental EIS Process:** SEACC recommended the remaining roadless areas on Wrangell Island be designated LUD II. The Alaska Rainforest Campaign (a coalition of national and Alaska conservation groups) recommended Roadless Area 289 for permanent protection as LUD II.

**(2) Nearby Roadless and Wilderness Areas and Uses:** There are four other roadless areas on south Wrangell Island. They are separated from the Central Wrangell Roadless Area by forest roads and harvest areas. Present recreation use levels are low in these areas except around Fools Inlet, at streams and lakes near the roads, and occasionally at the mouths of some streams. Subsistence use in the Wildlife Analysis Area that includes South Wrangell Island accounted for 5 to 10 percent of average annual deer harvest from 1987 to 1994. Thoms Lake recreation area forms part of the Central Wrangell Roadless Area's west boundary. Use levels are generally higher along the boardwalk trails to Thoms Lake and Long Lake than in other parts of the roadless area.

The nearest wilderness is the South Etolin Island Wilderness located about 5 miles to the southwest. The Stikine-LeConte Wilderness is located approximately 12 miles north of the Central Wrangell Roadless Area. This area currently receives light to moderate use inland, away from saltwater or road access.

**(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	85
Wrangell (Pop. 2,308)	10	20
Petersburg (Pop. 3,224)	45	60
Juneau (Pop. 30,711)	160	180

Wrangell is the nearest stop on the Alaska Marine Highway.

**(4) Relative Contribution to the National Wilderness Preservation System:** The Central Wrangell Roadless Area is centrally located on south Wrangell Island, approximately 20 miles south of the city of Wrangell. The area is bordered to the north, east, west, and part of the south by developed areas. The area is partially bordered to the southwest by Thoms Lake and the surrounding area owned by the state. The roadless area is generally characterized by moderately diverse, rounded to occasionally blocky terrain, with mountains reaching elevations of over 2,000 feet. The tallest is approximately 2,650 feet in elevation. Between the mountains are several U-shaped valleys containing streams.

The area itself is mostly unmodified; however, it is heavily influenced by developments and activities on adjacent lands. The natural integrity and apparent naturalness is moderate. The opportunity for solitude and primitive recreation is moderate.

None of the area landscape is considered distinctive for the character type from a scenery perspective. There are no known ecologic, geologic, scientific, or cultural features of significance in the area.

The roadless area includes about 2,494 acres of high-volume, old-growth forest. Of these acres, 247 are mapped as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth.

The Central Wrangell Roadless Area is classified as being in the Etolin Island and Vicinity Biogeographic Province and makes up approximately 3 percent of the province. It is 1 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 Central Wrangell Roadless Area lies completely within the Inside Passage Fjordlands Ecological Section and represents 1 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.

The Central Wrangell Roadless Area lies completely within the Zimovia Strait Complex Ecological Subsection and represents 7 percent of the ecological subsection. Approximately 5 percent of the subsection is protected in existing wilderness and 26 percent in other existing non-development LUDs.

The Central Wrangell Roadless Area was rated 16 out of a possible 28 points under the WARS. As such, its WARS rating is ranked 98th from the highest (along with 4 other roadless areas) among the 109 Tongass inventoried roadless areas.

There is little support for management of the area in an unroaded condition, and there is little support for designating the area as wilderness. Designation would create an irregularly shaped wilderness that has no significant or unique features, and that is heavily influenced by developments on adjacent lands. Overall, the factors identified here indicate that the relative contribution of this area to the National Wilderness Preservation System would be very low.

### **V. Environmental Consequences**

The Central Wrangell Roadless Area would be managed under the existing Forest Plan if Alternative 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 7 is implemented. Approximately 52 percent of the roadless area would be managed under non-development LUDs. Timber harvest and road development could occur in the remaining 48 percent. The land in the development LUDs provides an estimated 1,326 acres that are suitable for timber production (2 percent of the suitable acres on the Wrangell Ranger District). Approximately 41 of the suitable acres are classified as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. The timber sales, recreation, minerals, and special use programs would continue. The values associated with the natural settings of the roadless area could be affected by ongoing developments allowed by the Forest Plan.

Under Alternative 6, the entire area would be converted to Recommended LUD II. The ongoing recreation, minerals, and special use programs would continue similar to current conditions. No timber harvest would be

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allowed. The values associated with the natural settings of the roadless area would be provided long-term protection if designated LUD II.

Under Alternative 8, the entire roadless area would be converted to Recommended Wilderness. No timber harvest would be allowed and the ongoing recreation, minerals, and special uses programs would 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 would be provided long-term protection if designated wilderness.

Land Use Designation Allocations and Suitable Timber Lands by Alternative for Roadless Area 289 (in acres)								
Land Use Designation	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7	Alt 8
Recommended Wilderness								15,210
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	7,919	7,919	7,919	7,919	7,919		7,919	
Semi-remote Recreation								
Recommended LUD II						15,210		
LUD II								
Wild, Scenic, Recreational River								
Experimental Forest								
Scenic Viewshed								
Modified Landscape								
Timber Production	7,291	7,291	7,291	7,291	7,291		7,291	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15,210</b>	<b>15,210</b>	<b>15,210</b>	<b>15,210</b>	<b>15,210</b>	<b>15,210</b>	<b>15,210</b>	<b>15,210</b>
Suitable Timber Lands	1,326	1,326	1,326	1,326	1,326	0	1,326	0