

INDIVIDUAL ROADLESS AREA DESCRIPTION

ROADLESS AREA NAME: Southeast Wrangell (290)

ACRES (NFS): 20,297

BIOGEOGRAPHIC PROVINCE: Etolin Island and Vicinity

ECOLOGICAL SECTION: Inside Passage Fjordlands

2003 WILDERNESS ATTRIBUTE RATING: 17

I. Overview and Description

(1) **Location and Access:** This area is located on southeast Wrangell Island, approximately 15 miles southeast of the city of Wrangell, which is served by the Alaska Marine Highway and jet service. The area is separated from the mainland to the south by Ernest Sound. The 138 kV Tyee Powerline forms the east and part of the north boundary of the area along Blake Channel. The area is bounded to the west, and the remainder of the north, by Fools Inlet, Fools Inlet Road, and several forest roads and associated harvest units. The area is accessible from the surrounding saltwater and by forest roads. There are no sites suitable for landing wheeled aircraft. Access into the interior is by foot or helicopter.

(2) **History:** The area was inhabited by the Tlingit in prehistoric and historic times. While the area has likely been prospected for minerals, there are no known mining claims. The Tyee powerline that forms the east and part of the north boundary was constructed in 1984.

(3) **Geography and Topography:** The area is generally characterized by a mountainous ridge, which reaches elevations over 2,000 feet and with a high point of almost 3,000 feet. Between the mountains are several U-shaped valleys containing streams. The mountain ridge that dominates the area contains numerous small cirque lakes and short, steep streams. The area is bordered by saltwater to the south and Fools Inlet forms part of the area's west boundary. Freshwater lakes cover about 234 acres, alpine covers 160 acres, and rock covers 54 acres. The area includes approximately 13 miles of saltwater shoreline and 3 acres of small islands.

(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 Southeast Wrangell Roadless Area is contained entirely within the Inside Passage Fjordlands Ecological Section (M247E), represented by two ecological subsections (see table below). Covering the southern three-quarters of the roadless area, the Bell Island Granitics Ecological Subsection is characterized by rounded hills and narrow, glacially scoured valleys. Mountain slope soils are usually well-drained, mineral soil, while lowlands, lake margins and wetlands are typically poorly drained soils. The Zimovia Strait Complex Ecological Subsection covers the remaining quarter of the roadless area. It is composed of stratified sedimentary rock and volcanic intrusions lying 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).

Appendix C

Ecological Section	Ecological Subsection	Percent of Roadless Area
Inside Passage Fjordlands	Bell Island Granitics	74%
	Zimovia Strait Complex	26%

(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 develop 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. Steeper, well-drained hillsides support heavy stands of Sitka spruce, western hemlock, red cedar, and Alaska-cedar. There are small grass flats at the head of Fools Inlet.

There are approximately 19,137 acres mapped as forest land, of which 8,527 acres (45 percent) are mapped as productive old-growth forest. Of the productive old growth, 2,889 acres (34 percent) are mapped as high-volume, old-growth forest. The productive old growth includes about 172 acres of high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. In addition, 173 acres of second growth have resulted from logging activities north and west of Fools Inlet.

(d) Fish Resources: This roadless area includes the Off Point 1 and Ham watersheds, as well as a small part of the Fools Creek watershed. The most important riparian zones on the island are associated with very low gradient floodplain stream channels found in watersheds, such as the Fools Creek watershed. 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).

(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 three Land Use Designations (LUDs) under the 1997 Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan. These three LUDs are Timber Production, Scenic Viewshed, and Old-growth Habitat.

LUD	Acres
Timber Production	9,340
Scenic Viewshed	1,194
Old-growth Habitat	9,763

Approximately 52 percent of the roadless area was allocated to a development LUD (Timber Production and Scenic Viewshed). The east side and northern part of the area were mostly allocated to the Timber Production LUD, accounting for approximately 46 percent of the roadless area. A long narrow area adjacent to the Tyee Powerline on the east side of the area was allocated to the Scenic Viewshed LUD, accounting for approximately 6 percent of the roadless area.

Approximately 48 percent of the roadless area was allocated to one development LUD, Old-growth Habitat. The Old-Growth Reserve that occupies the southwest and southern portions of the area was allocated to the Old-growth Habitat LUD as part of the Forest-wide wildlife conservation strategy. A smaller reserve area in the north portion of the area was also allocated to this LUD.

The estuary at Fools Inlet is a popular waterfowl hunting spot. Hunters access this area from saltwater and overland from the road system (USDA Forest Service, 1998). Present recreation use levels are low except around Fools Inlet, at streams and lakes near the roads, 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.

This area includes part of the Blake timber sale project area proposed in the 1998 Wrangell Island Analysis (USDA Forest Service, 1998). This timber sale area is partially located in the east portion of the Southeast Wrangell Roadless Area. A second timber sale proposed in the Wrangell Island Analysis, the Fools timber sale, is located on the west edge of this roadless area, and is included in the Shady/Highbush timber sale analysis area.

The Tongass National Forest 10-year action plan identified a proposed Shady/Highbush timber sale EIS in 2003, which would result in harvest of 7.5 MMBF in 2004.

(6) Appearance (Apparent Naturalness): Overall, the area has high scenic quality with a natural appearing landscape and provides scenery from surrounding land and saltwater areas, including Ernest Sound and Blake Channel. However, the Tyee powerline occupies the foreground of views of the roadless area from Blake Channel. The Forest Service maintains a radio repeater on the mountaintop at the south end of the roadless area.

(7) Surroundings (External Influences): This area is located on southeast Wrangell Island. Ernest Sound separates this area from the mainland to the south. The Tyee powerline forms the east and part of the north boundary of the area. The area is bounded on the west and the remainder of the north by Fools Inlet, Fools Inlet Road, and several forest roads and associated harvest units. Timber sales are planned for portions of the roadless areas north and west of the Southeast Wrangell Roadless Area (USDA Forest Service, 2001). Boats traveling the waters of Blake Channel and Ernest Sound may be visible from within parts of the area, but usually are not intrusive. It is possible to see harvested areas, as well as the Tyee powerline, from some locations within this roadless area.

(8) Attractions and Features of Special Interest: The area contains 6 inventoried recreation places, which cover 1,535 acres, or 8 percent of the roadless area. The estuary at Fools Inlet is a popular waterfowl hunting spot. Hunters access this area from saltwater and overland from the road system. There are no improved trails in the area.

(9) Differences between the 1989 and 2003 Roadless Area Boundary: The Southeast 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 from the area 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. However, the Tyee powerline and a number of harvest units and roads are visible from portions of the area and affect the natural integrity and apparent naturalness of the area.

(2) Opportunity for Solitude, 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 around Fools Inlet, at streams and lakes near the roads, and occasionally at the mouths of some streams. Generally, a person camped or traveling inland is likely to see others only occasionally. The character of the landforms generally allows the visitor to feel remote from the sights and sounds of human activity.

Travel within the area is moderately challenging, requiring 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.

Appendix C

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)	11,880	59%
Semi-Primitive Motorized (SPM)	6,213	31%
Roaded Modified (RM)	2,204	11%

The area contains 6 inventoried recreation places, which cover 1,535 acres (8 percent) of the roadless area.

ROS Class	# of Rec. Places*	Total Acres
SPNM	0	0
SPM	1	699
RM	6	836

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

The estuary at Fools Inlet is a popular waterfowl hunting spot. Hunters access this area from saltwater and overland from the road system (USDA Forest Service, 1998). The area is accessible by boat from the community of Wrangell in 1 to 2 hours and from Ketchikan in approximately 7 hours. Access on land is by road from the city of Wrangell in about 1 hour.

(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 Southeast Wrangell Roadless Area represented only a portion of this area. The rating was redone for the Southeast Wrangell Roadless Area for this updated version of the Analysis of the Management Situation. Based on this evaluation, the area was given a rating of 17. This rating reflects the developments and activities in the vicinity of this area on its wilderness attributes.

(4) Ecologic and Geologic Values: The majority of the roadless area is forested with areas of higher volume old-growth forest concentrated along the lower elevation areas. Logging has occurred north and west of Fools Inlet. There are no known unique features in the area.

(a) Fish Resources: The Southeast Wrangell Roadless area includes portions of three separate VCUs. None of these VCUs were listed as primary sport fish or salmon producers. A number of Class II streams are located within the boundaries of this roadless area.

This roadless area includes the Off Point 1 and Ham watersheds, as well as a small part of Fools Creek watershed. The most important riparian zones on the island are associated with very low gradient floodplain stream channels found in watersheds, such as the Fools Creek watershed. 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).

(b) Wildlife Resources: Important species include Sitka black-tailed deer, wolves, black bear, pine marten, and small populations of brown bear and moose. Earlier analyses rated the Fools Landscape Unit, which includes part of the Southeast Wrangell Roadless Area, as moderate value for wildlife (USDA Forest Service, 1998). The area contains low value deer winter range, although a few small blocks of moderate winter deer habitat remain at Fools Inlet. Important marten habitat occurs along the beach and Fools Creek.

The Fools Creek estuary provides important habitat for salmon and shellfish, which serve as a food source for many wildlife species including otter, mink, and bear (USDA Forest Service, 1998). 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 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, 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.

(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 approximately 2 to 3 hours by boat and 1 hour by automobile from the city of Wrangell and is, therefore, relatively accessible to school-age children.

(6) Scenic Values: The majority of the area appears unmodified and generally has high scenic quality. The Tyee powerline that forms the east and part of the north boundary of the area is obvious from some parts of the roadless area and also to people viewing the area from Blake Channel. Fools Inlet Road and the forest roads and associated harvest units that bound part of the area to the west and the remainder of the north are also visible from some parts of the roadless area. Logging has occurred north and west of Fools Inlet.

Visual Priority Routes and Use Areas identified by the Forest Plan that are within or adjacent to the area, include Blake Channel and Ernest Sound, which are used by small tour ships. The road that borders the area to the west, Fools Inlet (#6270), is identified as a Visual Priority Public Use Road. Fools Inlet, which forms part of the area's west boundary, is identified as a Visual Priority Saltwater Use Area and Boat Anchorage.

Most of this area, approximately 75 percent, is inventoried as Variety Class A (possessing landscape diversity that is unique for the character type). About 19 percent of the area is inventoried as Variety Class B (possessing landscape diversity that is common for the character type) and about 6 percent is inventoried as Variety Class C (possessing a low degree of landscape diversity).

The majority of this roadless area, approximately 83 percent, has an Existing Visual Condition (EVC) Type I, where only ecological change has occurred on the landscape. One percent of the area appears to be untouched by human activity (EVC Type II). Ten percent of this roadless area is EVC Type III, where the average forest visitor notices changes in the landscape, but the natural appearance remains dominant. About 5 percent of the area 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 boat and automobile from the community of Wrangell. Wrangell is also the closest stop on the Alaska Marine Highway. Present recreation use levels are low, except around Fools Inlet (which is used by waterfowl hunters), at streams and lakes near roads, 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. The VCUs in this area were not listed among the VCUs with the highest community use values, but were listed among the VCUs with the highest sensitivity to disturbance of subsistence areas (ADF&G, 1998)

Appendix C

(8) Manageability as Wilderness and Boundary Conditions/Changes: The area is well defined by saltwater on the south and part of its west boundaries. The Tyee powerline forms the east and part of the north boundary of the area. The remainder of the west boundary is formed by forest roads and associated harvest units.

The south central portion of Wrangell Island was mainly allocated to the Timber Production and Old-growth Habitat LUDs, with relatively small areas allocated to the Scenic Viewshed LUD. Anan Creek, a congressionally designated LUD II area, is located on the mainland immediately south across Ernest Sound from the Southeast Wrangell Roadless Area.

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

(1) Recreation, Including Tourism Potential: There is potential for 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: 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 8,527 acres mapped as productive old growth in the roadless area. In addition, 173 acres mapped as second growth have resulted from logging activities north and west of Fools Inlet. Of these acres, 4,889 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), 1,109 acres (5 percent) of this roadless area are estimated to be suitable for timber production. Approximately 218 of the suitable acres are mapped as high-volume old growth; of these acres, only one is mapped as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. Some areas are highly prone to strong winds that 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 part of the Blake Timber Sale project area proposed in the 1998 Wrangell Island Analysis. The timber sale area is located in the east portion of the Southeast Wrangell Roadless Area. A second timber sale proposed in the Wrangell Island Analysis, the Fools Timber Sale, is located on the west edge of this roadless area, and is included in the Shady/Highbush timber sale analysis area (USDA Forest Service, 1998). The Tongass National Forest's 10-year action plan identified a proposed Shady/Highbush timber sale of 7.5 MMBF in 2004 with an EIS in 2003. Portions of this proposed sale would be in the roadless area.

(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: There are no known current claims in this area. This roadless area contains an estimated 36 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: 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. This plan would be accomplished by using a combination of new ferry terminals and upgraded road segments and a fast ferry route between South Wrangell Island 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 presently form the west boundary of the Southeast Wrangell Roadless Area. A final terminal location was not

identified in the plan but the maps accompanying the plan show the potential location of the terminal and the 3 miles of new road on the west side of the inlet, just outside the boundaries of the Southeast Wrangell Roadless Area (State of Alaska, Department of Transportation and Public Utilities, 1999). No additional utility corridors have been proposed within the roadless area.

(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 inventoried potential Research Natural Areas and has not been identified for any other scientific value.

(11) **Land Use Authorizations:** The Tye powerline that forms the east and part of the north boundary of the area is under special use permit. A radio repeater is located on a mountaintop between Fools Inlet and Blake Channel.

(12) **Land Status:** All land within the roadless area is part of the National Forest System; however, a small area of selected or encumbered land is located in the northeast corner of this 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 Southeast Wrangell Roadless Area. In 2001, HR 2908 did not propose the area for wilderness, but did propose that the majority of the area be classified as a Congressionally Designated LUD II area and managed in an unroaded condition. The area located west and north of Fools Inlet was 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 and Blake Channel in their 1991 list of areas that merited special management protection because of their outstanding wildlife, fisheries, hunting, fishing, subsistence, recreation, and tourism values. One party proposed that the head of Fools Inlet be allocated to the Semi-primitive LUD to protect the anchorages and undeveloped recreation areas.

The Wrangell Resource Council recommended that Wrangell Island be allocated to the Primitive Recreation LUD. Comments from the timber industry recommended that Management Area S25, which includes the Southeast 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:** The summary of public comments presented 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

Appendix C

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. The summary of public comments presented in the Wrangell Island Analysis 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 increasing public concern about the cumulative effects of timber harvest, road building, and recreation development on wildlife habitat (USDA Forest Service, 1998). The summary noted that the Fools Inlet area is routinely cited for its high wildlife values.

(f) Public Input Expressed During Supplemental SEIS 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 290 for permanent protection as LUD II.

(2) Nearby Roadless and Wilderness Areas and Uses: The East Wrangell Roadless Area is located north and northeast of this area. These two areas are separated by the Tyee powerline and associated right-of-way. The Central, South, and West Wrangell roadless areas are located west, separated from one another by existing roads and harvest units. Present recreation use levels are low 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. Road improvements, proposed for Wrangell Island in the March 1999 Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan, included upgrading Forest Road 6265 and Fools Inlet Road, which form the west boundary of the Southeast Wrangell Roadless Area, as well as constructing 3 miles of new roadway to a new ferry terminal at Fools Inlet.

The Congressionally designated Anan Creek roadless area (LUD II) is located directly south across Ernest Sound from the Southeast Wrangell Roadless Area. Nineteen outfitter/guides used the Anan Creek roadless area in 2000, for a total of 829 service days.

The nearest wilderness is the South Etolin Island Wilderness located about 10 miles to the southwest. The Stikine-LeConte Wilderness is located approximately 12 miles north of the Southeast Wrangell Roadless Area.

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

Community	Air Miles	Water Miles
Ketchikan (Pop. 14,070)	50	75
Wrangell (Pop. 2,308)	15	30
Petersburg (Pop. 3,224)	50	60
Juneau (Pop. 30,711)	165	180

Wrangell is the nearest stop on the Alaska Marine Highway.

(4) Relative Contribution to the National Wilderness Preservation System: The Southeast Wrangell Roadless Area is located on southeast Wrangell Island, approximately 14 miles southeast of the city of Wrangell. The area is separated from the mainland to the south by Ernest Sound. The 138 kV Tyee Powerline forms the east and part of the north boundary of the area along Blake Channel. The area is bounded to the west and the remainder of the north by Fools Inlet, Fools Inlet Road, and several forest roads and associated harvest units. The roadless area is generally characterized by a mountainous ridge that reaches elevations of over 2,000 feet with a high point of almost 3,000 feet. Between the mountains are several U-shaped valleys containing streams. The mountain ridge that dominates the area contains numerous small cirque lakes and short, steep streams. The area is bordered by saltwater to the south and Fools Inlet forms part of the area's west boundary.

The area is mostly unmodified; however, it is influenced by developments and activities on most borders. The natural integrity is high and the apparent naturalness is moderate. The opportunity for solitude and primitive recreation is moderate.

Approximately 75 percent of the landscape is considered distinctive for the character type from a scenery standpoint. There are no other unique or significant features in the area.

The roadless area includes about 2,889 acres of high-volume, old-growth forest. Of these acres, 172 are mapped as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth.

The Southeast Wrangell Roadless Area is classified as being in the Etolin Island and Vicinity Biogeographic Province and makes up approximately 4 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 Southeast 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 majority (74 percent) of the roadless area is in the Bell Island Granitics Ecological Subsection; this portion of the roadless area represents 5 percent of the entire ecological subsection, 14 percent of which is in existing wilderness, 9 percent in LUD II, and is well represented by other existing non-development LUDs (57 percent). The remainder (26 percent) of the roadless area is in the Zimovia Strait Complex Ecological Subsection; this portion of the roadless area represents 2 percent of the entire ecological subsection, 5 percent of which is protected in existing wilderness and 26 percent in other existing non-development LUDs.

The Southeast Wrangell Roadless Area was rated 17 out of a possible 28 points under the WARS. As such, its WARS rating is ranked 93rd from the highest (along with 4 other roadless areas) among the 109 Tongass inventoried roadless areas.

There is both local and national support for management of the area in an unroaded condition, and some support for designating the area as wilderness. Designation would create a wilderness that has high scenic qualities, but that is also heavily influenced by developments and activities in adjacent lands. Overall, the factors identified here indicate that the relative contribution of this area to the National Wilderness Preservation System would be low.

V. Environmental Consequences

The Southeast Wrangell Roadless Area would be managed under the existing Forest Plan if Alternative 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 7 is implemented. Approximately 48 percent of the roadless area would be managed under non-development LUDs. Timber harvest and road development could occur in the remaining 52 percent. The land in the development LUDs provides an estimated 1,109 acres that are suitable for timber production (1 percent of the suitable acres on the Wrangell Ranger District). Approximately 1 of the suitable acres is classified as high-volume, coarse-canopy old growth. This area contains an estimated 36 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 could be affected by ongoing developments allowed under the Forest Plan. The high scenic values of the roadless area are mostly protected 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 allowed. The values associated with the natural settings of the roadless area, including the scenic values, 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 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 scenic values, would be provided long-term protection if designated wilderness.

Appendix C

Land Use Designation Allocations and Suitable Timber Lands by Alternative for Roadless Area 290 (in acres)								
Land Use Designation	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7	Alt 8
Recommended Wilderness								20,297
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	9,763	9,763	9,763	9,763	9,763		9,763	
Semi-remote Recreation								
Recommended LUD II						20,297		
LUD II								
Wild, Scenic, Recreational River								
Experimental Forest								
Scenic Viewshed	1,194	1,194	1,194	1,194	1,194		1,194	
Modified Landscape								
Timber Production	9,340	9,340	9,340	9,340	9,340		9,340	
TOTAL	20,297	20,297	20,297	20,297	20,297	20,297	20,297	20,297
Suitable Timber Lands	1,109	1,109	1,109	1,109	1,109	0	1,109	0