



Forest Service
Alaska Region

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Pleasant/Lemesurier/Inian Islands Wilderness

In 1990, the United States Congress designated 23,151 acres as the Pleasant/Lemesurier/Inian Islands Wilderness. In the frigid waters of Icy Strait these scenic wilderness islands are squeezed between the northern part of Chichagof Island and Glacier Bay National Park. This wilderness area can be accessed by floatplane, motor or paddle boat. It is strategically managed to continue the preservation of this undeveloped, enduring ecosystem for the enjoyment of present and future generations.



Wilderness Laws

The Wilderness Act, ANILCA, and the Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan of 2008 (TLMP) give direction to designated wilderness areas in the Tongass National Forest. The Wilderness Act, ANILCA and/or TLMP **prohibit** the following:

- ◆ Commercial enterprise (except for outfitters and guides)
- ◆ Permanent and temporary roads
- ◆ Use of motor vehicles and motorized equipment (except snowmobiles, motorboats, and fixed wing airplanes)
- ◆ Mechanized form of transport (i.e. bicycles, wheelbarrows)
- ◆ Damaging of live trees
- ◆ Construction of structures and installations
- ◆ Landing of helicopters

Under ANILCA and TLMP temporary structures are allowed but are limited to a 14-day stay at any one location. TLMP also mandates a group size limit of no more than 12 persons for commercial or general public use within this wilderness. These regulations are established for the wilderness character to remain undeveloped, natural and untrammelled for future use.

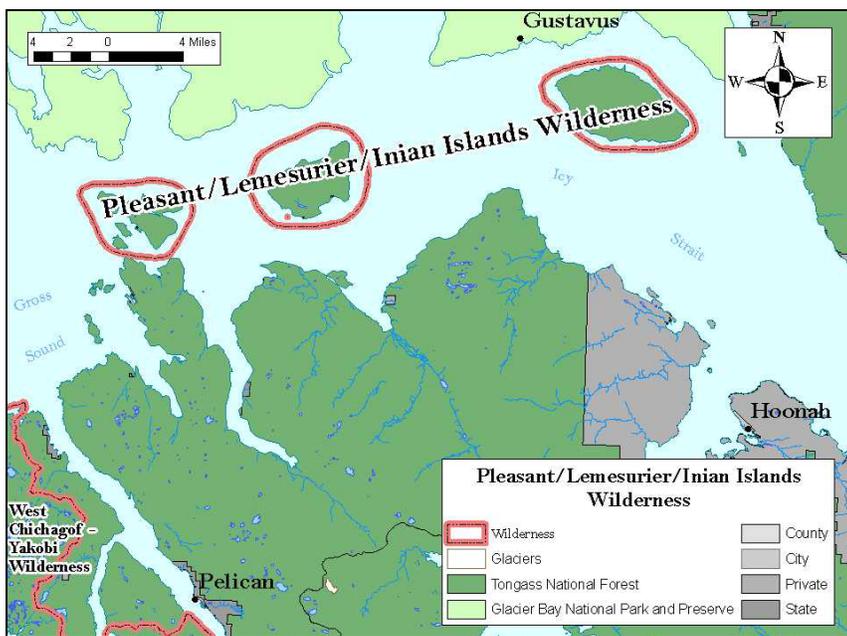
Facilities

There are no established hiking trails or public recreation facilities, although every island within this area provides a variety of recreational opportunities.

Wilderness Character

While in this wilderness, feast the eyes not on the land but on the ocean. Bubble feeding and breaching humpbacks and orcas can be a frequent occurrence in the frigid waters between Cross Sound and Icy Straits. Only a short paddle from Gustavus and a day trip from Hoonah can provide the cheapest whale watching and porpoise viewing opportunities in all of southeast Alaska. When approaching each of the three areas in this wilderness by boat, it is inevitable to see their uniqueness; Pleasant Island being the largest but flattest, Lemesurier Island being the tallest at 2,180 feet and containing sub-alpine areas, and the Inian Islands area encasing several smaller islands that produce stunted trees due to the proximity to the open ocean weather. Nothing more will give a sense of solace then listening to the spouting of whales or the bellowing of sea lions as the sun goes down around you.





Wilderness Challenges

People are lured into Alaska for its beauty and excitement but remember it is also very unforgiving. Pleasant/Lemesurier/Inian Islands Wilderness is within a temperate rainforest where the average summer temperatures are between 45-65°F. Be prepared with the appropriate clothing, safety equipment, shelter supplies, and water purifying devices for a cool and frequently overcast climate. This wilderness also contains brown bears so store food and trash properly. If traveling by boat, caution should be taken through this unique area in Icy Strait.

Threats and Benefits

While designated wilderness areas have the most protections of any other public lands, there are still threats that degrade the wilderness resource. Trash pollution from visitors, illegal storage of commercial fishing equipment, illegal shore ties from float houses, and resource damage by littering, spread of invasive species, trespass structures, and damaged flora are the major human threats to this wilderness. Building awareness and a better understanding of designated wilderness areas is the key foundation to ensure that these areas stay wild.

Along with providing excellent recreational opportunities, designated wilderness areas protect natural ecosystems from being manipulated or developed. They provide us with clean air and clean water, and allow the natural processes to continue without the permanent presence of humans. As the current laws continue to give management direction, no wilderness on the Tongass will have a commercial timber harvest or construction of permanent roads. Due to the action of Congress in 1990, Pleasant/Lemesurier/Inian Islands Wilderness will remain protected for future generations.

Leave No Trace

Tongass National Forest is the largest, intact coastal rainforest in America. The Pleasant/Lemesurier/Inian Islands Wilderness is a piece of this treasure and is set aside for all visitors – now and in the future. To insure that this area is left unimpaired for future use, practice the following Leave No Trace principles.

- ◆ Plan ahead and be prepared for extreme weather conditions, and emergencies.
- ◆ Travel and camp on durable surfaces. These wilderness islands are managed as pristine areas. Disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails and avoid places where impacts are just beginning.
- ◆ Dispose of waste properly. **Pack out** all trash, leftover food, and toilet paper. During appropriate conditions dispose of human waste in the intertidal zone. If camping in upland forests dispose of solid waste by digging a cathole 6 to 8 inches deep located at least 200 feet from water or campsite.
- ◆ Leave what you find. Examine but do not touch cultural or historical structures and artifacts. Do not build structures or furniture with live trees.
- ◆ Minimize campfire impacts. Use a lightweight stove when possible. When a campfire is necessary, keep fires small. Build a fire below mean high tide, or when in a forested area, build a mound fire or use a fire pan to avoid damaging the ground vegetation. Stay away from boulders or tree bases to avoid long lasting black scars.
- ◆ Respect wildlife and other visitors in the surrounding area.

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