



Angoon Airport

Issue

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) proposes to build and operate an airport on Admiralty Island near the city of Angoon, Alaska. Sites for the airport could be on National Forest System lands within the Kootznoowoo Wilderness on Admiralty Island National Monument.

Alternatives to locating the airport in wilderness are to pursue a land exchange pursuant to Section 1302(h) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) or to seek Congressional approval to change the wilderness boundary. If the airport project is no longer located within a Conservation System Unit, Title XI of ANILCA will not apply. The Forest Service must decide which option it will pursue before the EIS process proceeds much further.

Additional information may be found at the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) website: www.angoonairporteis.com.

Background

FAA is the lead agency for the environmental impact statement. The Forest Service and ADOT&PF are cooperating agencies. SWCA Environmental Consultants is FAA's contractor to develop the EIS.

The need for the Angoon Airport is to provide emergency air service, reduce the community's isolation, allow for greater economic and infrastructure development in an area with pressing development needs, and improve access to Admiralty Island National Monument.

ADOT&PF's proposal for the airport encompasses approximately 270 acres and includes a single 3,300 foot runway (with the ability to expand to 4,000 feet), a 3.5-acre apron that would include areas for airport support facilities, and an access road. This airport would be similar in size and facilities to existing airports at Hoonah and Kake.

The location of the proposed site involving National Forest System lands would be approximately three miles southeast of Angoon on the northeasterly side of Favorite Bay. About four miles of new road construction would be required. The proposal is partially within National Monument lands and partially within Kootznoowoo, Inc., corridor lands. These are lands within the National Monument granted to Kootznoowoo, Inc., through ANILCA, with significant reserved interests held by the United States.

FAA will decide whether to approve funding for construction of the airport and whether to approve the Airport Layout Plan. The Forest Service will decide whether to grant and administer a special use authorization for airport operation on the national monument.

Title XI of ANILCA provides the process for considering transportation and utility systems in Conservations System Units, which would require both presidential and congressional approval.

Current Situation

FAA and the Forest Service signed a memorandum of understanding for cooperation in preparation and review of the EIS and meeting Title XI of ANILCA. SWCA is preparing the draft EIS.

More Information

Admiralty National Monument Ranger, (907) 789-6202, or Jennifer Berger, IDT Leader, (907) 789-6278, Admiralty Island National Monument, Tongass National Forest, Alaska Region.