

## **Wild and Scenic Rivers**

**Goal:** Maintain the outstandingly remarkable values and the free flowing conditions of rivers designated or recommended for designation as components of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

**Objectives:** Manage all rivers recommended for designation as Wild, Scenic, or Recreational rivers in the Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) to maintain their eligibility pending designation by Congress into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

**Background:** The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 established a policy for preserving selected rivers in a free-flowing condition that would balance the development of water, power and other resources on rivers of the United States. Rivers are eligible to be considered for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System if they are essentially free-flowing (without major dams, diversions, or channel modifications) and if they possess at least one “outstandingly remarkable” scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar value. These values should be a unique or exceptional representation for the area that the evaluation of a river’s eligibility considers.

### **Wild and Scenic River Question 1: Are Wild, Scenic, and Recreational River Standards and Guidelines being implemented?**

There are no Standards and Guidelines written specifically for rivers recommended and / or designated Wild and Scenic. Management prescriptions are used instead to maintain and enhance the free flowing conditions and outstandingly remarkable values for which the river was found suitable for designation as part of the National Wild and Scenic River System.

Other rivers once recommended for designation as wild and scenic but not later designated as such were also monitored this year for information on the continued embodiment of their wild and scenic qualities. These rivers include the Stikine River, Taku River, Antler River, Punchbowl Creek, Nooya Creek, Unuk River, and the Klahini River. These rivers were generally found to have maintained their wild and scenic qualities in 2007.

Anan Creek, a designated Wild and Scenic River, serves as an example of effective implementation of management prescriptions. Although the bear viewing area at Anan receives heavy commercial and public visitor use, restrictions on permitted activities and number of visitors serve to keep visitor impacts to a minimum.

### **Wild and Scenic River Question 2: Are Wild, Scenic, and Recreational River Standards effective in maintaining or enhancing the free flowing conditions and outstandingly remarkable values at the classification level for which the river was found suitable for designation as part of the National Wild and Scenic River System?**

Management prescriptions followed at Anan for the preservation of Wild and Scenic Rivers have been effective in maintaining and enhancing the remarkable values of the river. The structures present at Anan Creek and the activities that take place there are consistent with its designation as a Wild and Scenic river. The Recreational River Standards are effective in maintaining and enhancing the free flowing conditions and outstandingly remarkable values.

## Monitoring Results

### *Wrangell*

In Wrangell, Anan Creek and Stikine River were monitored in 2007. Neither river underwent any resource management activities due to their wilderness designations. Both rivers are regulated by a visitor carrying capacity and neither river exceeded their capacities in 2007. Lingering ice in the often heavily visited Shakes Lake area of the Stikine, and the required \$10 visitor pass for Anan helped to limit visitor use this year. At Anan there were 1,562 visitors to this site during the 27 day regulated season (July 5—August 25). The daily visitor capacity at Anan is 60 visitors, not including guides or cabin users (up to 4 cabin users per day).

**Table 1.** Visitor Numbers for Anan Bear Viewing Area 2007

Date	Local	Official	Private	Trans	Guided	Guides	Total
July 5	6	0	17	3	28	6	54
July 6	13	0	11	7	42	8	68
July 7	2	0	15	0	45	8	68
July 8	2	0	5	5	32	5	47
July 9	3	0	30	12	16	3	61
July 10	3	0	9	9	28	4	50
July 11	0	0	4	0	30	5	39
July 12	0	0	14	16	24	6	60
July 13	0	0	20	3	33	7	63
July 14	0	0	6	4	41	7	58
July 15	0	0	14	2	36	9	61
July 16	3	0	22	7	23	6	58
July 17	0	0	25	6	18	3	52
July 18	0	0	7	9	25	6	47
July 19	3	0	16	5	38	8	67
July 20	6	0	8	12	36	7	63
July 21	8	0	15	0	46	8	69
July 22	2	0	6	2	55	9	72
July 23	0	0	8	3	43	9	63
July 24	2	0	18	2	40	7	67
July 25	1	0	5	6	39	8	58
July 26	0	0	7	15	19	3	44
July 27	2	0	23	4	30	4	61
July 28	12	0	21	6	14	3	44
July 29	3	0	14	0	23	5	42
July 30	0	0	13	6	44	9	72
July 31	2	0	12	32	8	2	54
<b>Total</b>							1562

**Table 2.** 2007 Anan Commercial Use by Guiding Companies July 5 through August 25

<b>Guiding Company</b>	<b>2007 Service Day Allocation (7/5-8/25)</b>	<b>Commercial Passes Used</b> (actual # used, not including no shows)	<b>Private Passes Guided</b>	<b>Total Clients for Company</b>	<b>No Show</b>
Alaska Charters & Adv.	80	42	43	85	17
Alaska Peak & Sea's	80	41	126	167	28
Alaska Vistas	106	65	28	93	41
Alaska Waters	206	184	151	335	7
All Aboard Yacht Charters	26	20	0	20	0
Aqua Sports	25	12	14	26	11
Bluewater Adventures	71	65	0	65	6
Breakaway Adventures	301	252	48	300	42
Dolphin Charters	17	15	7	22	0
Hallco Inc / Sumdum	24	0	0	0	9
Island Wings Air Service	80	55	3	58	6
Southeast Alaska Flyfishing	140	27	2	29	15
Stickeen Wilderness Adv	200	138	50	188	43
Taquan Air	46	42	0	42	4
Tenacious Charters	6	0	0	0	0
Timber Wolf Charters	75	53	11	64	12
Wild Rockies Field Ins.	10	10	0	10	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,493</b>	<b>1,021</b>	<b>483</b>	<b>1,504</b>	<b>241</b>

**Table 3.** 2007 Anan Commercial Use by Transporter Companies July 5 through August 25

<b>Transporter Companies</b>	<b>2006 Service Day Allocation (7/5-8/25)</b>	<b>Commercial Passes Transported</b> (actual # used, not including no shows)	<b>Private Passes Transported</b>	<b>Total for Company</b>	<b>No Show</b>
Alaska A1 Adventures	80	17	2	19	17
Carlin Air	58	45	22	67	5
Family Air	80	55	12	67	20
Pacific Airways	40	0	0	0	0
Southeast Aviation	80	49	41	90	29
Sunrise Aviation	80	9	9	18	48
<b>Total</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>119</b>
Unpermitted Transporters			51	51	
<b>Total Transported</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>119</b>

### *Juneau*

In the Juneau Ranger District, the Taku River and the Antler River were monitored in 2007. A Canadian mine company was in the exploratory stages of reopening the Tulsequah Chief Mine which can be accessed via the Taku River. No impact on the river was noted in 2007, however, should this controversial project move forward, the future of the outstandingly remarkable values of the Taku will likely be in jeopardy as the mining company uses the Taku as its major corridor of access. The Antler River was monitored in conjunction with fisheries eulachon project. Their

work camp was set up ½ mi up the river. There was only light use of the Antler by bear hunters and eulachon dip net fishers. The weather this year limited the usual amount of dip netting.

### *Ketchikan / Misty Fiords*

Floatplane landings are the main form of impact in the Misty Fiords National Monument. Airlines are limited by permit per lake, per day, and per company. Allowable limits vary by company and while companies generally do not use up their entire quota of landings per day, it is a common event (especially during days of good weather) for the number of allowable social encounters in wilderness areas to be exceeded (when a floatplane landing is counted as a social encounter).

Nooya Creek and Punchbowl Creek were both monitored repeatedly in conjunction with recreation site monitoring and conducting of permit checks. Nooya's social trails are developed and used primarily by bears alone. Very little floatplane activity occurred at Punchbowl while Nooya was inundated as usual by floatplanes. Visitor use impacts at Nooya manifest mainly in the form of noise pollution. A permitted and guided group of 20 people was observed at Punchbowl this year. After 2007, maximum group size will be limited to 12. Punchbowl has several developed social trails at the saltwater shoreline, and one social trail at the lake shoreline.

The Unuk and Klahini Rivers were monitored on a wilderness use kayak monitoring trip in conjunction with archaeological surveys. The Klahini was observed to be in its ideal and uninterrupted wild and scenic state. On the lower reaches of the Unuk, private in-holdings and floatplane landings were observed.

### *Thorne Bay*

Thorne River reports that no major sale or harvest near the Thorne River went through in 2007 despite mention in the 2006 monitoring report of a proposed timber sale near the Thorne River.

## **Evaluation of Results**

Monitoring completed on the Tongass showed that the management prescriptions are generally effective in maintaining the free flowing conditions and outstanding remarkable values for eligible rivers.

## **Action Plan**

Continued monitoring of Wild and Scenic Rivers will continue but it is important to note in Appendix E of the FEIS for the Forest Plan there are 112 rivers with a total length of approximately 1,400 miles which are recommended for consideration in the National Wild and Scenic River System. This is a significant inventory and additional resources are necessary to monitor these rivers effectively.