

Starrigavan Road 7513, Sitka Ranger District, Tongass National Forest

August 11, 2014

Background

An interdisciplinary group evaluated best management practices (BMPs) on road 7513 in Starrigavan Recreation Area. The work was completed on the road in 2014. The Sitka District Ranger determined that these actions fall under categories of action excluded from documentation in an environmental impact statement (EIS) or environmental analysis (EA) as established by the Chief, FSH 1909.15.30, 32.12 “Repair and Maintenance of roads, trails and landline boundaries”. This road accesses Starrigavan Recreation Area, a popular recreation area, and Harbor Mountain Road and is located near the community of Sitka. It includes an estuary, recreation facilities including camping, picnic sites, an artesian well and several different recreation trails. It is regularly graded and very popular with tourists and locals alike. The road switch backs up a steep gradient.

During the BMP monitoring, 760 feet of road were evaluated and of those 400 feet were located within an Aquatic Monitoring Zone (AMZ). The road crosses one perennial stream/river with a baffled culvert with a headwall on the downstream side, covered in graded aggregate.

The need for continued use of this road has been documented in an Access and Travel Management Plan (ATM) and road objectives have been developed. This road is closed by gate for winter travel.

BMP Implementation

The implementation questions evaluate practices used to minimize water quality impacts. All applicable BMPs were implemented at the road. A review of the maintenance project files documented aquatic specialist review and recommendations. The work was completed by a Forest Service Contractor. The work included blading the road with a compaction B and all the roads within in the campground were graded and rolled twice. The first grading occurred in July and the second in September. The section selected for monitoring was focused on a Class II stream that transported water from the side slope across the road and toward a Class I stream. This site was selected because it was the shortest distance between the crossing and the Class I stream. The Forest Service inspector was onsite during critical times of the road the grading. The BMPs were fully implemented at the site.

Corrective Actions to Improve Implementation

No corrective actions were noted for this road.

Adaptive Management Actions to Improve Implementation

No adaptive management actions were noted for the road.

BMP Effectiveness

The effectiveness questions evaluated evidence of potential or current impacts to water quality. The road segment included one waterbody crossing, designated as a perennial stream/river and a Class I and II stream. No evidence of erosion or sedimentation was noted at the waterbody crossing or its approach. The road grade was consistent with no rills or ruts. No diversion potential noted. The streams were flowing in their natural channel and the culverts were designed to transport water across the road.

Corrective Actions to Improve Effectiveness

No corrective actions were noted for the road.

Adaptive Management Actions to Improve Effectiveness

No adaptive management actions were noted for the road.



Starrigavan Road Photo 1. Starrigavan road surface



Starrigavan Road Photo 2. Downstream culvert



Starrigavan Road Photos 3 & 4. Downstream culvert



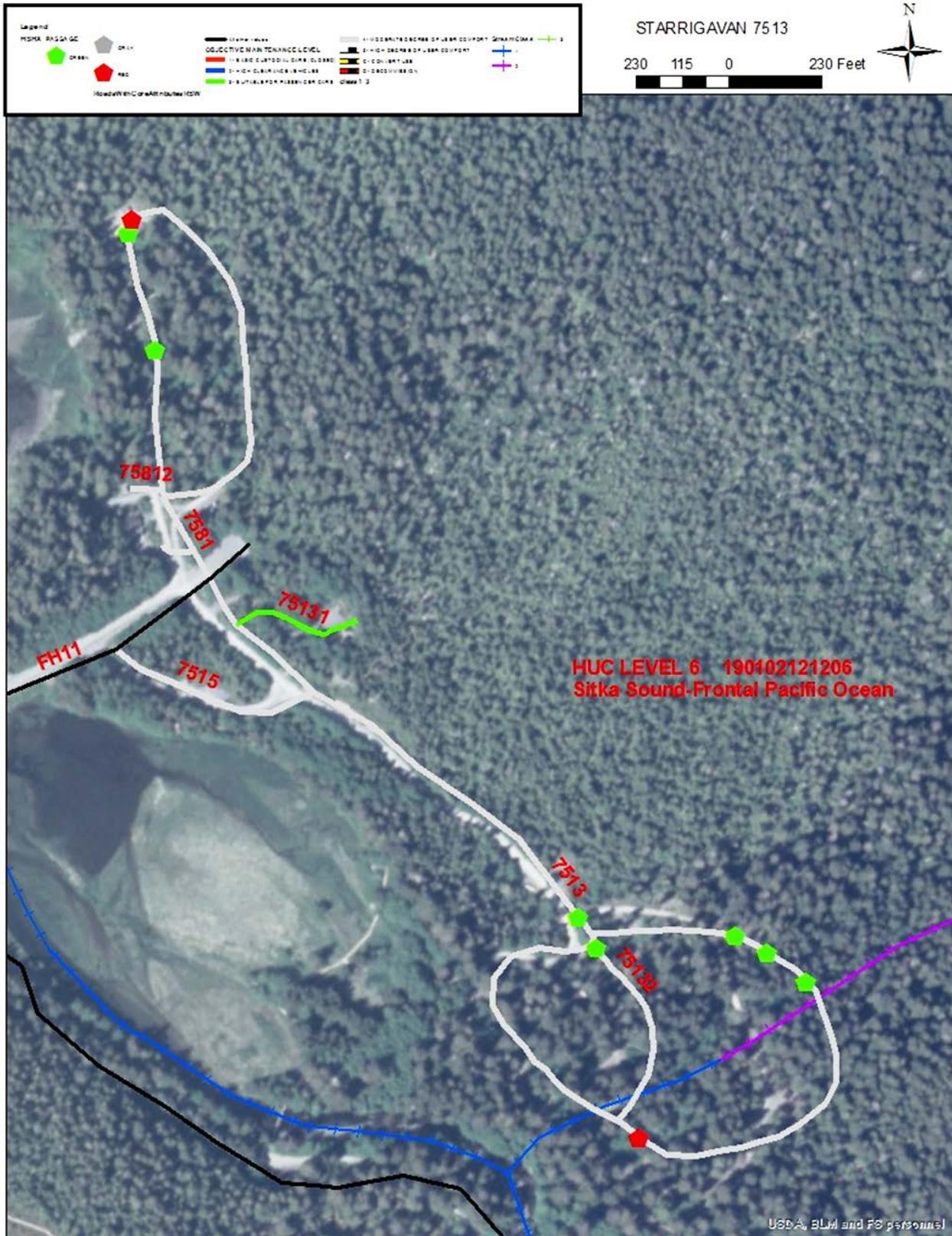
Starrigavan Road Photos 5 & 6. Upstream culvert



Starrigavan Road Photo 7. Starrigavan road looking west



Starrigavan Road Photo 8. Starrigavan road looking east



Starrigavan Road Figure 1. Ortho photo of Starrigavan recreation area