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Petersburg Creek— Duncan Salt Chuck Wilderness

The United States Congress designated the Petersburg Creek- Duncan Salt Chuck Wilderness Area in 1980 and it now has a total of 46,849 acres. Situated on the Lindenberg Peninsula of Kupreanof Island, and located across the Wrangell Narrows from the city of Petersburg, this wilderness can easily be accessed by 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 outfitter 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, and natural for future use.

Facilities

There are two public recreation cabins, two established hiking trail and one primitive hiking trail within the Petersburg Creek – Duncan Salt Chuck Wilderness.

Wilderness Character

At the doorstep of civilization, Petersburg Creek-Duncan Salt Chuck Wilderness can refresh almost any wild soul. Enjoy a day of wildflower frolicking in the grassy estuary of Petersburg Creek or a weekend trip into Petersburg Lake or Duncan Salt Chuck. At the undulating boundary of fresh and salt water lies two hiking trails, one that reaches Petersburg Mountain at 2,800 feet and one that arrives at Petersburg Lake. From “the creek”, start hiking up the glacier cut U-shaped valley that is home to many black bears, Sitka black-tailed deer, moose and wolves. Fishing poles are a most due to the abundance of anadromous swimmers, including four species of salmon, Dolly Varden, and Cutthroat trout. Keep an eye and ear on the other visitors like ducks, geese, trumpeter swans, bald eagles, and osprey that could fly in and out during the day’s journey. Whether having only hours on the creek, days on the trail, or a week at a cabin, this wilderness will open the door to self discovery and wild explorations.



Wilderness Challenges

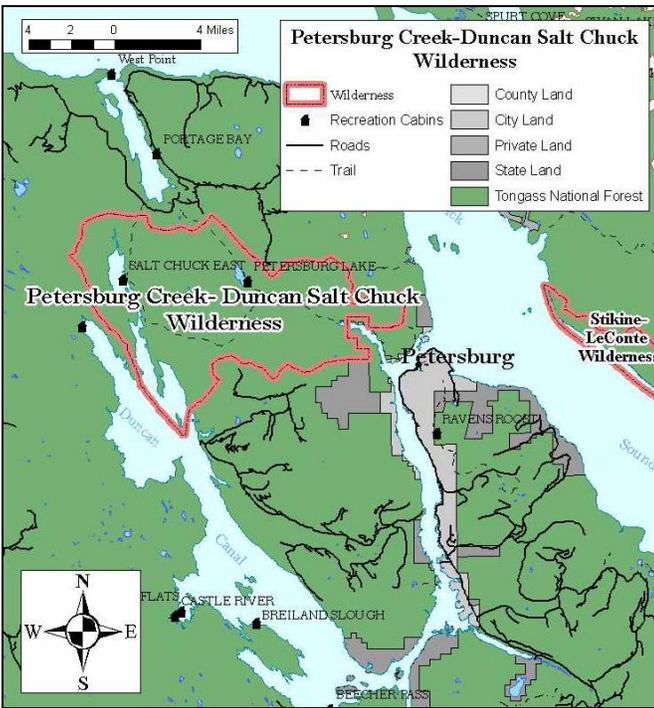
People are lured into Alaska for its beauty and excitement but remember it is also very unforgiving. Petersburg Creek – Duncan Salt Chuck Wilderness is within a temperate rainforest where the average summer temperatures are between 45-65°F. Be prepared with the appropriate clothing, safety equipment, shelter supplies, and water purifying devices for a cool and frequently overcast climate. This wilderness also contains black bears so store food and trash properly. Bears are concentrated on the grass flats in the spring and summer months so be especially careful around salmon spawning streams.

Leave No Trace

Tongass National Forest is the largest, intact coastal rainforest in America. The Petersburg Creek– Duncan Salt Chuck 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. If a cabin rental is not an option, disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails. Stay on the Petersburg Creek Trail or the Portage Mountain Loop Trail when possible. Avoid places where impacts are just beginning.
- ◆ Dispose of waste properly. **Pack out** all trash, leftover food, and toilet paper. Use bathroom facilities when available. 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. 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.

This flyer was printed with the help of recreation fee money. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



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 motorized use, outfitter/guide violations, social impacts of heavy boat traffic disturbing visitor's solitude, and resource damage by littering, campfire scars, 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 1980, Petersburg Creek-Duncan Salt Chuck Wilderness will remain protected for future generations.