



Forest Service
Alaska Region

Tongass National Forest
Craig Ranger District
PO Box 500
Craig, AK 99921

Phone: (907) 826-3271

Fax: (907) 826-2792

www.fs.fed.us/r10/tongass



South Prince of Wales Wilderness

In 1980, the United States Congress designated 90,968 acres as the South Prince of Wales Wilderness. Situated on the southwest corner of Prince of Wales Island, wilderness is 30 miles southeast of Hyدابurg and 40 miles southeast of Ketchikan. Enjoy the many treasures of this wilderness when you arrive by boat or floatplane to any of the smaller islands or to the main Prince of Wales island area. Rest assured that 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 (TLRMP) give direction to designated wilderness areas in the Tongass National Forest. The Wilderness Act, ANILCA and/or TLRMP **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 TLRMP temporary structures are allowed but are limited to a 14-day stay at any one location. TLRMP 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.

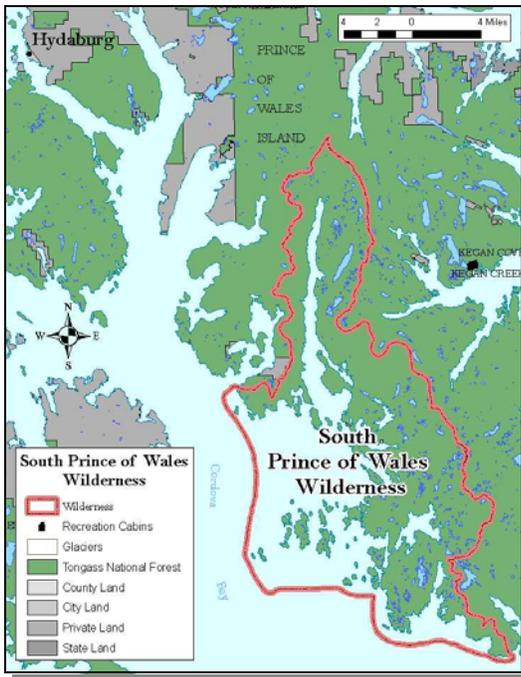
Wilderness Character

Caution: The feeling of lengthened height and a diagonal body may overwhelm you. This wilderness contains 75 or more islands that range from a few to over 500 acres in size which are exposed to the wind and weather conditions from Dixon Entrance. This exposure stunts and leans the natural southeast Alaskan forest of Sitka spruce, western hemlock and western red cedar. If the feeling overpowers you, head to the beach where at low tides an ocean community of abalones, giant barnacles, clams, large mussels, starfish, sea urchins and even the occasional octopus can be seen. You might feel like the only human as you roam in this wilderness, but in the 19th century the first Haida Indian village was established and remained until almost one hundred years ago. Connect back to the past and let the spirits of southeast Alaska flutter around you.

Facilities

There are no established hiking trails or public recreation facilities in South Prince of Wales Wilderness.





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. Permit violations by outfitters and guides, damaging of cultural and historical sites, decrease in bear hunting quality, and resource damage by timber theft, spread of invasive species 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, South Prince of Wales Wilderness will remain protected for future generations.

Wilderness Challenges

People are lured into Alaska for its beauty and excitement but remember it is also very unforgiving. South Prince of Wales 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. During the summer months, be especially careful around salmon spawning streams. If traveling by boat, be aware of the frequent and fierce storms that can come from Dixon Entrance.

Leave No Trace

Tongass National Forest is the largest, intact coastal rainforest in America. The South Prince of Wales 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. South Prince of Wales is managed as a pristine area. 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. On the marine shore 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. This wilderness contains remnants of the first Indian village in southeast Alaska that was established in the 19th century and was abandoned in 1911. 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.

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

