



Spit Point Wildlife Habitat Restoration Project in an Inventoried Roadless Area

Issue

The Spit Point Wildlife Habitat Restoration Project was approved by the USDA Natural Resources and Environment December 2009. This project will allow for trees to be cut within an Inventoried Roadless Area of the Tongass National Forest. Beach buffers on the Tongass provide important habitat for a variety of wildlife species. Older, previously clear-cut stands in the beach buffer have undergone dense conifer regeneration (stem exclusion) that has eliminated the forage understory and reduced structural diversity, providing little to no habitat value.

Background

The project stands are located adjacent to Carroll Inlet on Revillagigedo Island, approximately 13 miles east of Ketchikan, Alaska (see map on page 2). The project proposes to thin two stands totaling 71 acres that were harvested about 55 years ago. Treatment does not require any new road construction, road reconstruction or road maintenance. About 50 tons/acre of biomass could be removed to prevent slash from impeding wildlife use. This biomass could be utilized as part of the supply for proposed plans to convert diesel-powered heat to wood energy in Southeast Alaska.

Stand #72 is about 50 acres and lies within a Modified Landscape Land Use Designation. Stand #110 is about 21 acres and lies with a Semi-Remote Recreation Land Use Designation and is within the 53,559 acre **South Revilla (523) Inventoried Roadless Area (IRA)**. Treatment of this stand will affect less than 1 percent of the IRA.

Expected Results

- This project will interrupt the existing stem exclusion condition and accelerate transition back to old growth conditions. Portions of stands will be opened to allow more light penetration and facilitate regeneration of understory shrubs and forbs.
- Biological diversity will be reintroduced into stands by promoting more complex stand structure such as large crowned, dominant trees, large future snags, and large down wood. Thinning will promote western red cedar and Sitka spruce for species diversity.
- This project will test the feasibility and economics of yarding and removing material to a barge anchored offshore instead of constructing roads. If successful, this method could potentially be used to treat thousands of acres of beach fringe for wildlife habitat improvement and provide woody biomass supply.

Current Situation

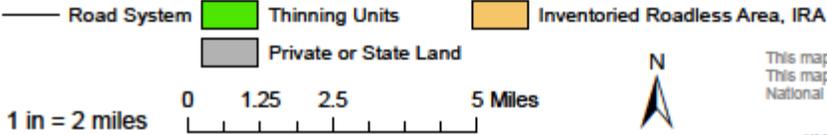
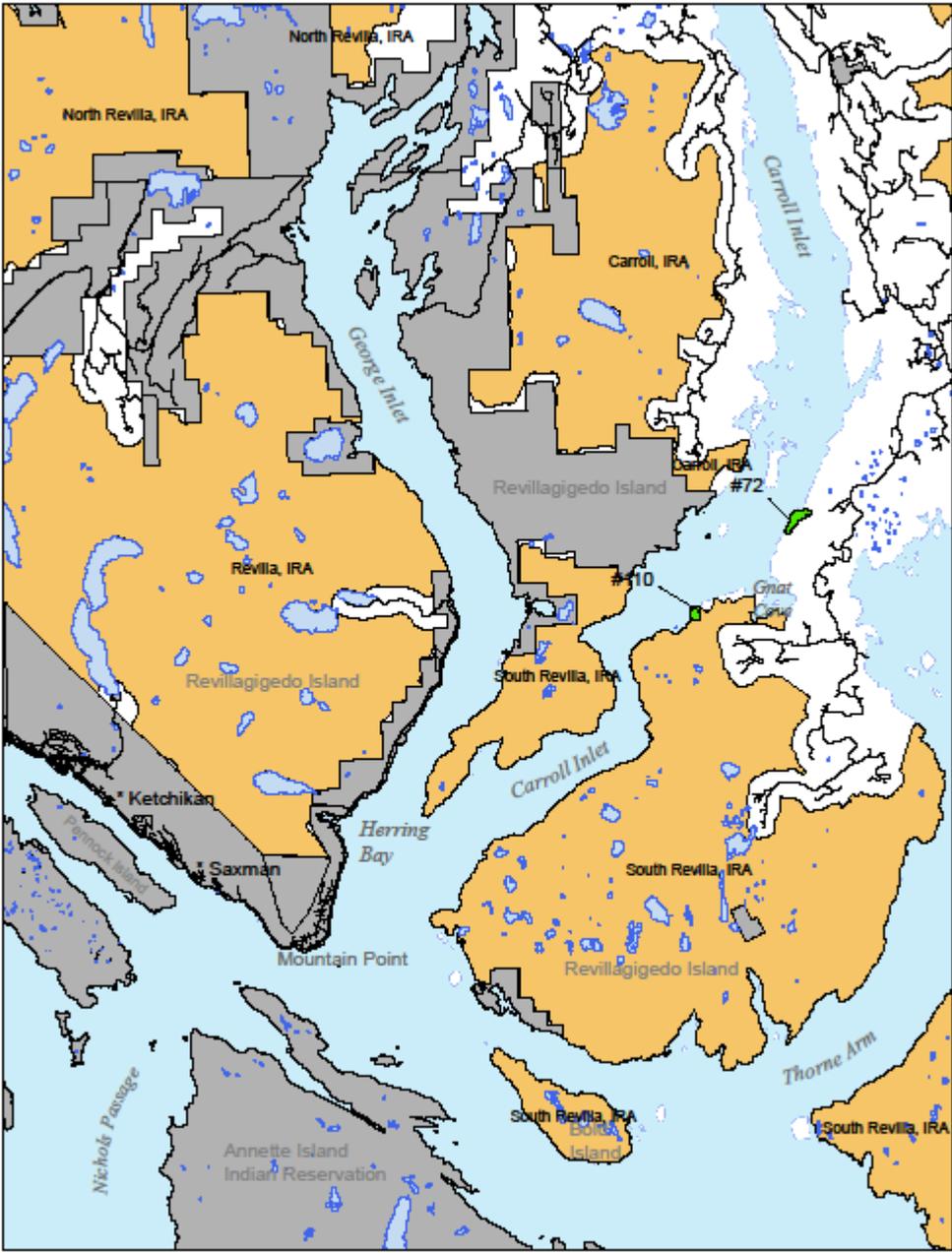
The project falls within categorical exclusion (CE) category 36 CFR 220.6 (e)/FSH 1909.15, 31.2 (6) "Timber stand and/or wildlife improvement..." This category requires a decision memo (DM) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The decision memo was signed January 2010.

This project has gone through public scoping, tribal consultation, and was developed through collaboration with partners. It is supported by tribal governments, State agencies, environmental groups, the timber industry, and has general support from the Tongass Futures Roundtable.

More Information

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Spit Point Wildlife
Habitat Restoration
Categorical Exclusion



This map made from GIS data.
 This map may or may not meet
 National Map Accuracy Standards

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