

Coastal cabins see much-needed repairs

Cabin repair funded by the Great American Outdoors Act Legacy Restoration Fund



Before and after view of the Southeast Heckman cabin roof.

The Tongass National Forest is the nation's largest national forest, spanning nearly 17 million acres and comprising the largest intact temperate rainforest in the world. Home to world-class recreation experiences, the Tongass has a lot to offer not only to locals but to tourists from across the globe. From hiking and biking to hunting and wildlife watching activities, the Tongass evokes passion among its many users.

Ketchikan, home to the world's largest collection of standing totem poles, boasts the first port of entry for many of Alaska's cruise ships. The Ketchikan Misty Fjords Ranger District encompasses about 3.25 million acres on the southeastern end of the Tongass National Forest and includes the glacier-sculpted 2.1 million acre Misty Fjords National Monument Wilderness.

Being the third rainiest city in Alaska, Ketchikan-based cabins are a much-valued resource for overnight stays in the forest. The Ketchikan Misty Fjords cabin project set out to extend the life of many of the district's cabins.

A crew of three employees rallied to repair and improve four of the twelve cabins proposed in the project in 2021. Landing crafts brought in the needed supplies, and battling inches upon inches of rain, the crew pulled out all the stops to make the work happen. Roofs were repaired and cleaned, rot was fixed, outhouses were mended, and new coats of paint were applied. Visitors have shared feedback such as "We're really impressed with the work," and "The cabins are really nice!"

The summer season of 2022 will see seven additional cabins rehabilitated through the funding, five of which are in the Misty Fjords National Monument Wilderness.