



United States Department of Agriculture

Alaska Roadless Rulemaking



Forest Service

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United States Department of Agriculture

Meeting Outcome and Agenda

Meeting Outcome:

Inform participants about the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule, Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), and opportunities to engage in the rulemaking process.

Agenda:

- Presentation
- Q&A Session
- Agency personnel available for one-on-one discussions
- ANILCA 810 Subsistence Hearing



Forest Service



What is Rulemaking?

Administrative Procedure Act (APA)

- Process by which federal agencies issue regulations.
- Provides for publishing notices of proposed and final rules in Federal Register.
- Provide opportunity for public comment.
- US Department of Agriculture Secretary is decision maker.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

- Process by which federal agencies consider and disclose potential environmental effects prior to federal actions.
- Provides opportunity for public involvement.
- Forest Service is lead agency for developing environmental impact statement (EIS).





2001 Roadless Rule

- US Department of Agriculture issued regulation to manage National Forest System roadless areas nationally – the Roadless Area Conservation Rule (2001 Roadless Rule).
- 2001 Roadless Rule established to protect and conserve inventoried roadless areas.
- Prohibits timber harvest, road construction, and road reconstruction in inventoried roadless areas with limited exceptions.

 National Forest System	Total Roadless Acres	Total Acres	Percent Roadless Area
Nationwide	58.5 M	193.0 M	30%
Alaska	15.5 M	22.1 M	70%
Chugach National Forest	5.36M	5.4 M	99%
Tongass National Forest	9.2 M	16.7 M	55%



What is an Inventoried Roadless Area (IRA)?

- 80% of IRAs exceed 5,000 acres and are normally without roads, timber harvest, and other development.
- Does not include congressionally designated Wilderness Areas.
- 2001 Roadless Rule describes nine roadless characteristics.

Inventoried Roadless Area (IRA) Characteristics

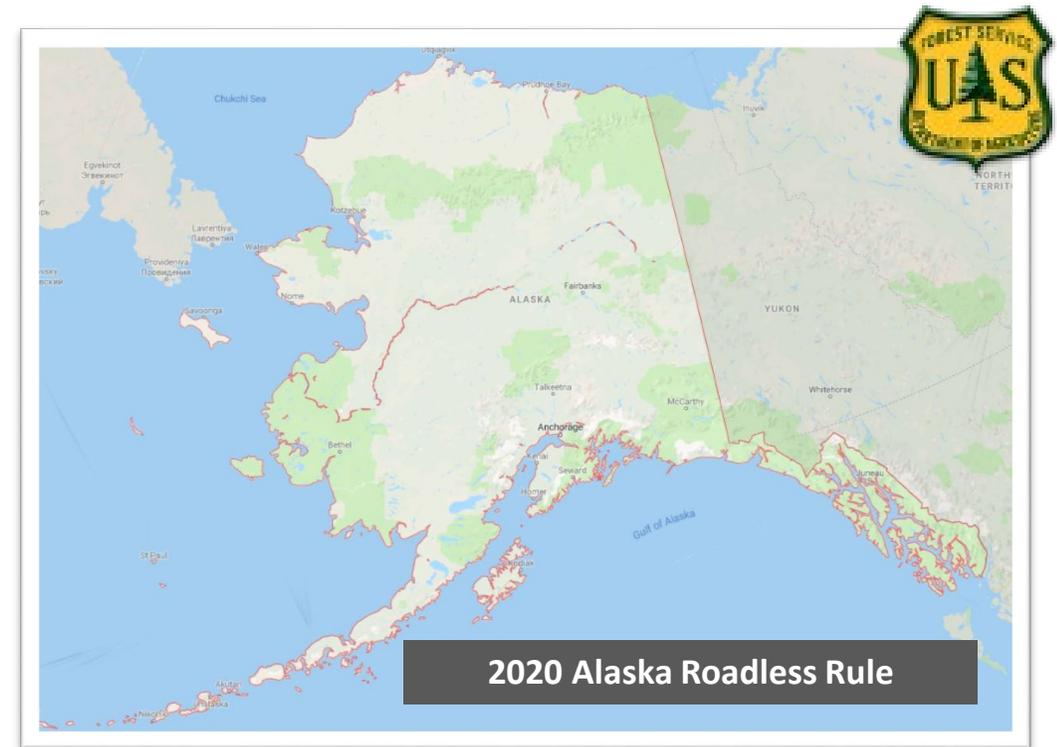


Characteristic	Description
1	High-quality or undisturbed soil, water, or air.
2	Sources of public drinking water.
3	Diversity of plant and animal communities.
4	Habitat for threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate and sensitive species.
5	Primitive, semi-primitive motorized, and semi-primitive non-motorized.
6	Reference landscapes used to study the effects of management activities.
7	Natural-appearing landscapes with high scenic quality.
8	Traditional cultural properties and sacred sites.
9	Other locally-unique characteristics.



Alaska Roadless Rulemaking

- January 2018 – State of Alaska petitions US Department of Agriculture for full exemption citing need for increased economic opportunity.
- Tongass National Forest – Unique characteristics including size, percent roadless acres, local community dependence, and unique statutory considerations.
- USDA – Desires a long-term and durable approach to addressing Alaska’s unique social, ecological, and economic issues related to roadless areas.





Alaska Roadless Rulemaking

- August 2018 – Notice of Intent initiated a public rulemaking process.
- September and October 2018 – 45-day scoping period to collect public input.
- October 2018 through September 2019 – Forest Service develops roadless area management options and analyzes in draft environmental impact statement (DEIS).
- October 2019 – Notice of Availability of Proposed Rule and DEIS; initiates 60-day public comment period.

44252 Federal Register / Vol. 83, No. 169 / Thursday, August 30, 2018 / Proposed Rules

procedures at this airport, as part of the VOR MON Program.

Class E airspace designations are published in paragraph 6005 of FAA Order 7400.11B, dated August 3, 2017, and effective September 15, 2017, which is incorporated by reference in 14 CFR 71.1. The Class E airspace designation listed in this document will be published subsequently in the Order.

Regulatory Notices and Analyses

The FAA has determined that this regulation only involves an established body of technical regulations for which frequent and routine amendments are necessary to keep them operationally current, is non-controversial and unlikely to result in adverse or negative comments. It, therefore: (1) is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12966; (2) is not a "significant rule" under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034; February 26, 1979); and (3) does not warrant preparation of a regulatory evaluation as the anticipated impact is so minimal. Since this is a routine matter that will only affect air traffic procedures and air navigation, it is certified that this rule, when promulgated, would not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

Environmental Review

This proposal will be subject to an environmental analysis in accordance with FAA Order 1050.1F, "Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures" prior to any FAA final regulatory action.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 71

Airspace, Incorporation by reference, Navigation (air).

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me, the Federal Aviation Administration proposes to amend 14 CFR part 71 as follows:

PART 71—DESIGNATION OF CLASS A, B, C, D, AND E AIRSPACE AREAS; AIR TRAFFIC SERVICE ROUTES; AND REPORTING POINTS

■ 1. The authority citation for 14 CFR part 71 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(f), 106(g); 40103, 40113, 40120; E.O. 10854, 24 FR 9565, 3 CFR, 1959-1963 Comp., p. 389.

■ 71.1 [Amended]

■ 2. The incorporation by reference in 14 CFR 71.1 of FAA Order 7400.11B, Airspace Designations and Reporting

Points, dated August 3, 2017, and Ecosystem Planning and Budget Staff.



Notice of Intent

“... current timber harvest and road construction / reconstruction restrictions can be adjusted for the Tongass National Forest in a manner that meaningfully address local economic and development concerns while balancing roadless area conservation needs.”

- Federal Register August 30, 2018

¹projects=54511. In addition, written comments can be submitted via hard-copy mail to: Alaska Roadless Rule, USDA Forest Service, Alaska Region, Tongass National Forest; the large percentage of roadless areas that comprise the Tongass National Forest; the degree of dependency of local





PROPOSED ALASKA ROADLESS RULE ALTERNATIVE 6 – FULL EXEMPTION

- Exempts 9.2 million inventoried roadless acres on the Tongass National Forest (100%).
- No regulatory prohibitions on timber harvest or road construction/reconstruction.
- Land management activities guided primarily by the 2016 Tongass National Forest Plan.

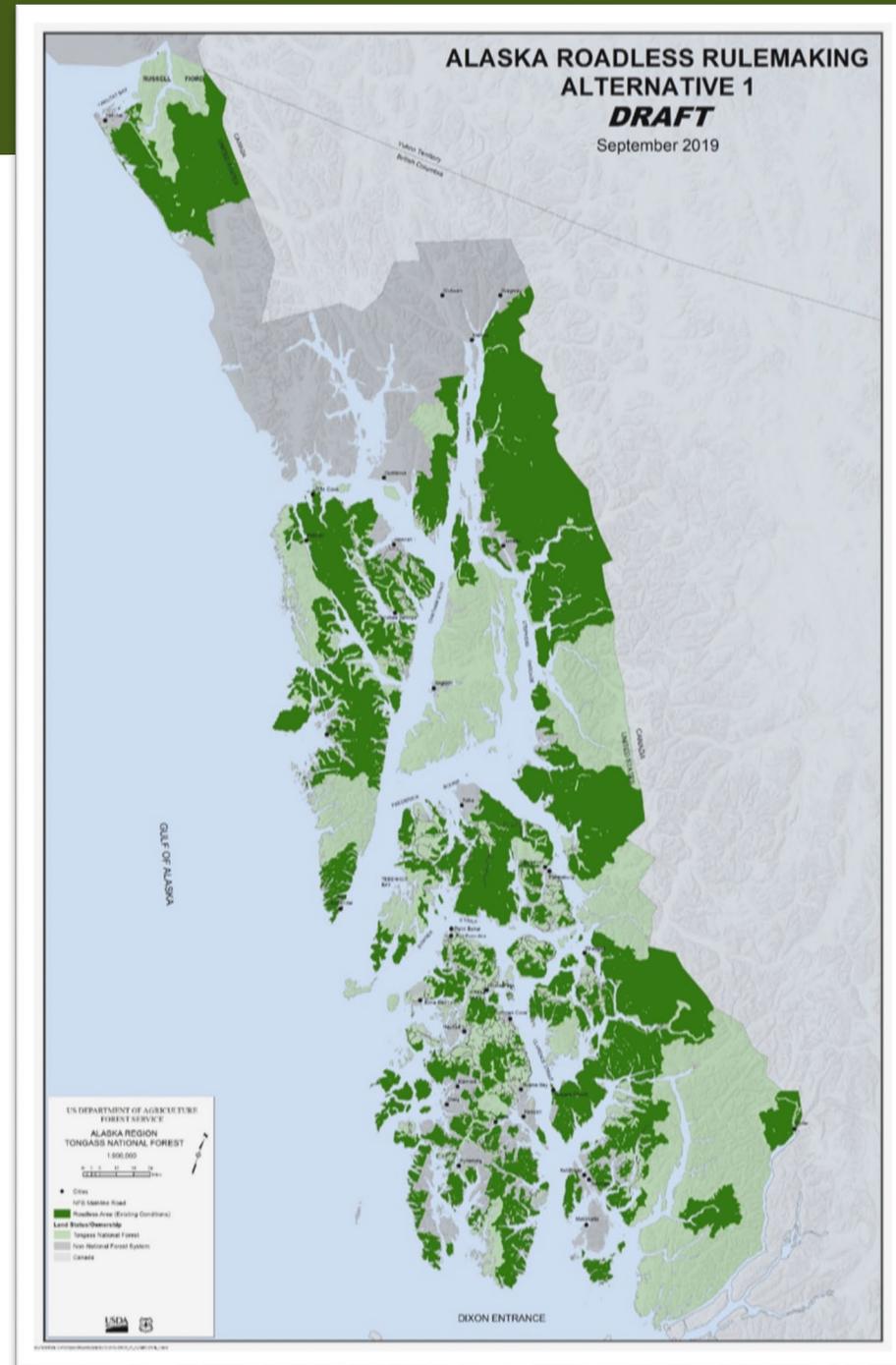
Chugach National Forest

- 2001 Roadless Rule remains applicable.
- Administrative correction and modification provision.



ALTERNATIVE 1 – NO ACTION

- “No Action” alternative as required by National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).
- 2001 Roadless Rule, which covers 55% of the Tongass National Forest.
- Includes 110 inventoried roadless areas totaling 9.2 million acres.
- 0 acres removed from roadless area protection.
- Timber harvest, road construction, and road reconstruction prohibited with limited exceptions.





Key Issues Identified

Alaska Roadless Rule Scoping Period: Written Public Comment Summary

Introduction

This report provides a summary of written public comments received for the Roadless Area Conservation Rule; National Forest System Lands in Alaska (Alaska Roadless Rule) following the Aug. 30, 2018 publication of FR 44252) ended Oct. 15, 2018. This report provides a range of perspectives in written comments to the original letters located in the project management.org/Public/ReadingRoom?P...

The overall objectives of this report are to:

1. Aggregate and summarize public comments
2. Identify input for developing the rule
3. Identify other public concerns relevant to the rule

This report addresses these objectives through:

1. Public Comment Overview
2. 2001 Roadless Rule
3. Alaska-Specific Roadless Rule
4. Southeast Alaska Timber Industry
5. Roadless Area Management Record
6. Additional Scoping Period Comments

Background

In August 2018, the U.S. Department of Agriculture initiated a public rulemaking process to address the Roadless Rule within the State of Alaska. This rulemaking process was administered in January 2018 on behalf of the U.S. Forest Service. The petition was accepted by the Secretary of Agriculture, as well as an exemption set forth in the petition, as well as infrastructure, timber, energy, mining, and economic development, while still conserving roadless habitat. The Final Environmental Impact Statement is estimated to be released in spring 2020, with a final rule expected in June 2020.

Scoping Report Overview

1. Public Comment Overview
2. 2001 Roadless Rule
3. Alaska Roadless Rule
4. Southeast Timber Industry
5. Roadless Area Management
6. Additional Input

- Scoping Period Written Comments
August 30 – October 15, 2018



Key Issue Summary



Issue	Concern	Description
1	Conserve Roadless Area Characteristics	Protection of roadless area characteristics from road development and timber harvest activity.
2	Support Community Socioeconomic Well-Being	Tongass National Forest comprises approximately 80 percent of Southeast Alaska and therefore plays a critical role in supporting local and regional socioeconomic well-being including community vibrancy, Alaska Native culture, rural subsistence lifestyles, and economic opportunity across multiple economic sectors.
3	Conserve terrestrial habitat, aquatic habitat, and biological diversity	Protection of terrestrial and aquatic wildlife habitat and biodiversity from road development and timber harvest activities.

Alaska Roadless Areas Reimagined

Alaska Roadless Area (ARA) Overview



*Broad Protections
Targeted Development*



*Broad Development
Targeted Protections*

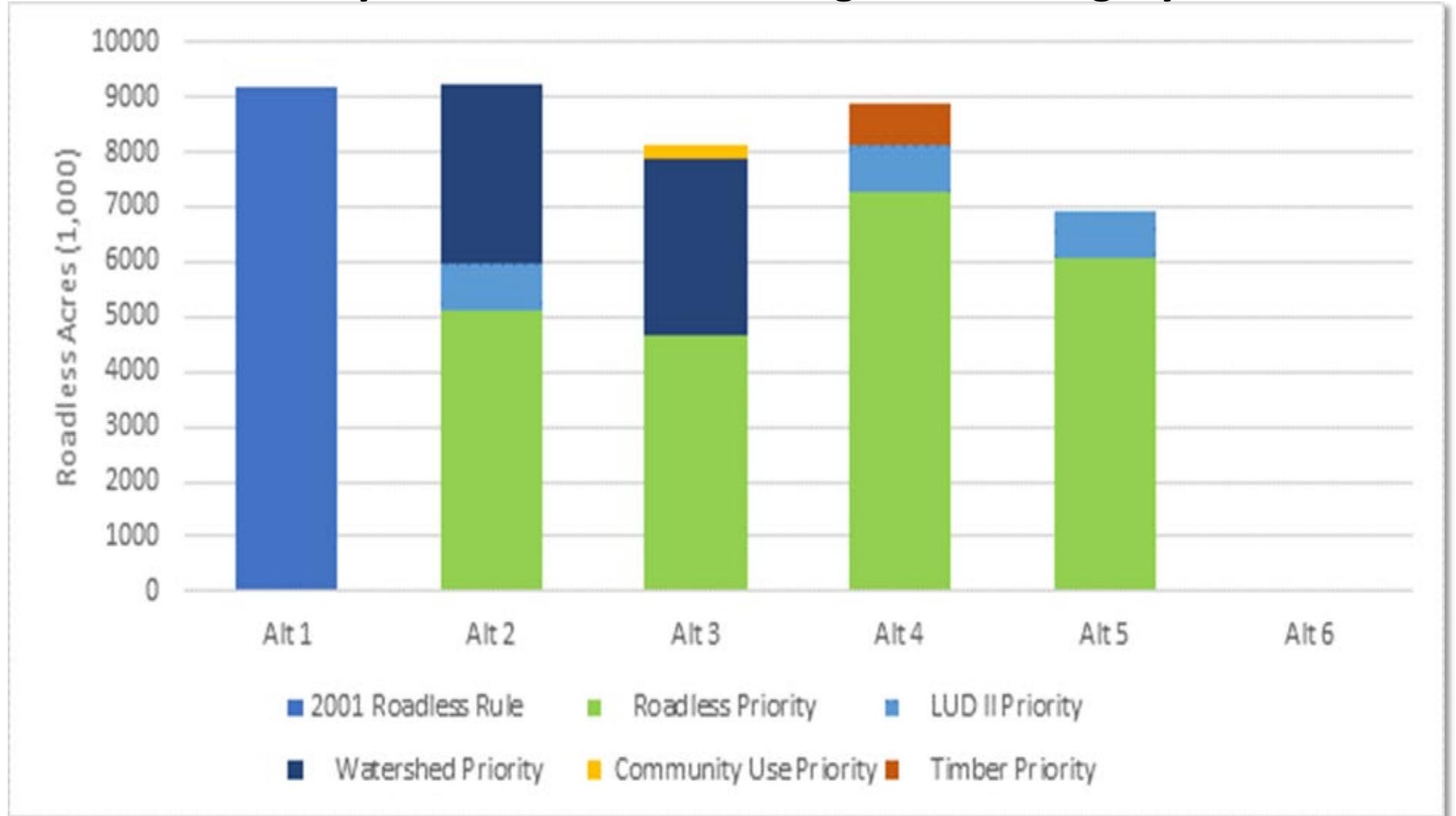
Alaska Roadless Area	Description
Watershed Priority	More protective than the 2001 Roadless Rule's Inventoried Roadless Areas as it offers fewer exceptions for timber harvest and road development while still providing for activities specific to aquatic and terrestrial habitat improvement and protection. Includes Tongass 77 (T77) Watersheds and The Nature Conservancy (TNC)/Audubon Conservation Areas.
LUD II Priority	Reduces land management ambiguity by translating congressionally-designated LUD II areas to LUD II Priority Alaska Roadless Areas that are managed for wildland character with few exceptions for timber harvest and road development. LUD II Priority areas will be managed in a roadless state to retain wildland character as required by the federal statute, thereby ensuring congressional intent.
Roadless Priority	The most <u>similar to</u> 2001 Roadless Rule's Inventoried Roadless Areas, but is less restrictive by accommodating Alaska-specific concerns by excepting infrastructure development to support and connect communities and road construction for renewable energy and leasable minerals development including minerals, geothermal, oil, gas, and coal development.
Community Use Priority	Addresses the specific desires of some communities to retain roadless protections while allowing small timber sales and road development to support community timber operators, infrastructure development to connect and support communities, and to provide improved access for traditional Alaska Native cultural uses.
Timber Priority	The least restrictive land management category as it prioritizes timber management by excepting timber harvest, road construction, and road reconstruction with minimal to no limitations.





Roadless Areas by Alternative

Roadless Areas by Alternative and Management Category





Roadless Area Characteristics

- **Physical Environment** -- Roadless areas provide high-quality or undisturbed soil, water, and air.
- **Water** -- Roadless areas provide a variety of water resources including public drinking water sources, fish and aquatic resources, and hatchery aquatic resources.
- **Diversity** -- Roadless areas support a diversity of plant and animal communities including stands of old-growth forests.
- **Habitat** -- Roadless areas are expansive areas where high-quality intact habitat exists and ecosystems function with all their native species and components. Roadless areas serve as habitat for threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species and for those species dependent on large, undisturbed areas of land.
- **Remoteness** -- Roadless areas provide economic opportunity due to rich primitive, semi-primitive motorized, and semi-primitive non-motorized classes of dispersed recreation.
- **Landscape** -- Roadless areas provide reference landscapes of relatively undisturbed areas that serve as a barometer to measure the effects of development on other parts of the landscape.
- **Scenery** -- Roadless areas have natural-appearing landscapes with high-scenic qualities that people value.
- **Cultural** -- Roadless areas are rich in traditional cultural properties and sacred sites. In Alaska indigenous peoples have been on national forests for more than 10,000 years and the forests have cultural significance.
- **Locally-unique characteristics.** Roadless areas represent geographic areas with additional locally-unique characteristics specific to Alaska including: (a) important source of subsistence resources including terrestrial wildlife, waterfowl, mammals, fish, and plant-based resources; (b) rich habitat that supports multiple species of fish for personal, subsistence, sport, recreation, and commercial harvest; and (c) supports diverse economic opportunity that is especially important for rural community well-being.





ALTERNATIVE 2 – ROADED ROADLESS

- Provides limited additional area for timber harvest opportunity while maximizing roadless area protections.
- Removes “roaded roadless” acres from the roadless area inventory, including both development and non-development Land Use Designations (LUDs).
- Applies Watershed Priority ARA to Tongass 77 (T77) Watersheds and The Nature Conservancy (TNC)/Audubon Conservation Areas.
- Includes LUD II and Roadless Priority Designations.

Roadless Category	Alternative 2
Total Roadless Area	9,220,000
ARA Management Categories	
LUD II Priority	9%
Watershed Priority	35%
Roadless Priority	55%
Change in Roadless Area Acres	
Roadless Area Removed	113,000
Roadless Area Added	133,000



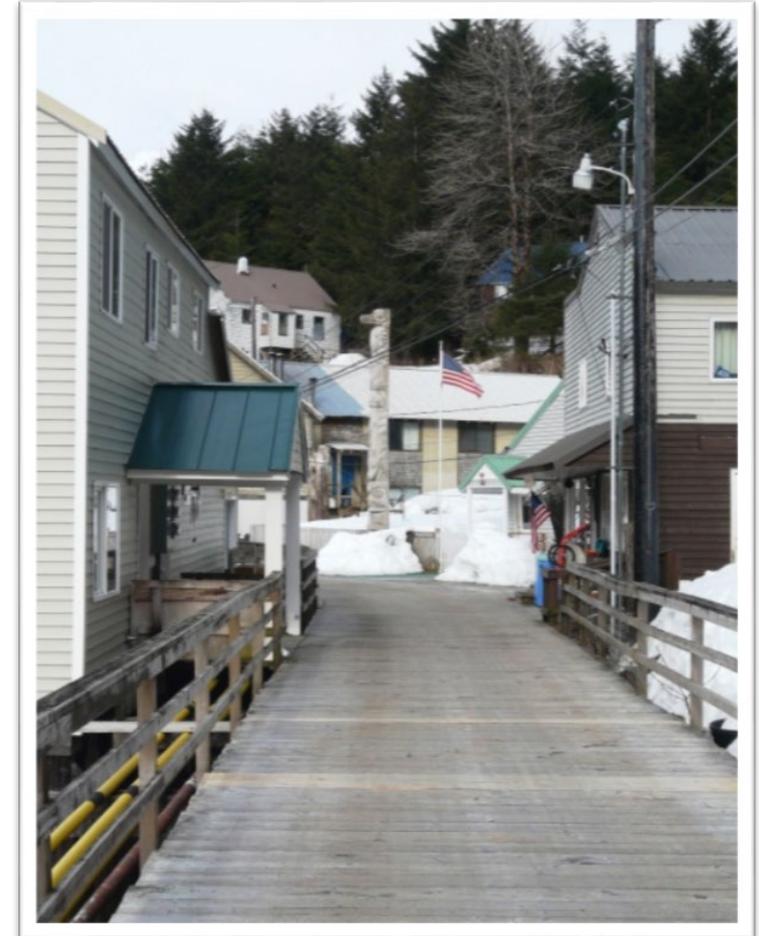
ALTERNATIVE 3 – LOGICAL EXTENSIONS

- Provides moderate additional timber harvest opportunity while maintaining roadless area protections as much as feasible.
- Extends “roaded roadless” area bounds to logical end points and removes from roadless area designation, including both development and non-development LUDs.
- Applies Watershed and Community Priority ARAs (Community Priority by request).
- Utilizes Roadless Priority ARA for remaining roadless areas.

Roadless Category	Alternative 3
Total Roadless Area	8,103,000
ARA Management Categories	
Watershed Priority	40%
Roadless Priority	57%
Community Priority	3%
Change in Roadless Area Acres	
Roadless Area Removed	1,202,000
Roadless Area Added	105,000

Alternative 3 Notable – Community Use Priority

- Developed to address community preferences to retain roadless protections while allowing small scale timber harvest to support local operators, infrastructure development to support communities, and/or to provide for Alaska Native cultural uses.
- Must be requested by municipal government, tribal government, or non-profit community association.
- Applied to Juneau, Ketchikan, Sitka, Wrangell, Yakutat, Kake, and Hydaburg based on submitted comments.





ALTERNATIVE 4 – PARTIAL DEVELOPMENT LUDS

- Provides significant additional timber harvest opportunity while maintaining roadless area protection for Scenic Viewsheds, T77 Watersheds, and TNC/ Audubon Conservation Areas.
- Areas identified in Alternative 3 as “logical extensions” removed from roadless area designation, including both development and non-development LUDs.
- Applies Timber Priority ARA to Timber Development and Modified Landscape LUDs.
- Establishes regulatory LUD II and Roadless Priority ARAs.

Roadless Category	Alternative 4
Total Roadless Area	8,857,000
ARA Management Categories	
LUD II Priority	10%
Roadless Priority	82%
Timber Priority	8%
Change in Roadless Area Acres	
Roadless Area Removed	375,000
Roadless Area Added	32,000





ALTERNATIVE 5 – FULL DEVELOPMENT LUDS

- Provides maximum additional timber harvest opportunity by removing lands classified as Timber Development, Modified Landscape, and Scenic Viewshed LUDs from roadless area inventory including T77 Watersheds and TNC/Audubon Conservation Areas.
- Minerals Overlay, as provided by the Forest Plan, also removed from the roadless area designation.

Roadless Category	Alternative 5
Total Roadless Area	6,905,000
ARA Management Categories	
LUD II Priority	12%
Roadless Priority	88%
Change in Roadless Area Acres	
Roadless Area Removed	2,298,000
Roadless Area Added	3,000





Roadless Acres by Alternative

Roadless Area Acreage Summary by Alternative

Alternative	Roadless Acres Removed	Roadless Acres Added	Net Change	Total Roadless Areas
Alternative 1 No Action	0	0	0	9,200,000
Alternative 2 Roaded Roadless	113,000	133,000	20,000	9,220,000
Alternative 3 Logical Extensions	1,202,000	105,000	-1,098,000	8,103,000
Alternative 4 Partial Development LUDs	375,000	32,000	-343,000	8,857,000
Alternative 5 Full Development LUDs	2,298,000	3,000	-2,295,000	6,905,000
Alternative 6 Full Exemption	9,200,000	0	-9,200,000	0





Environmental Analysis Overview

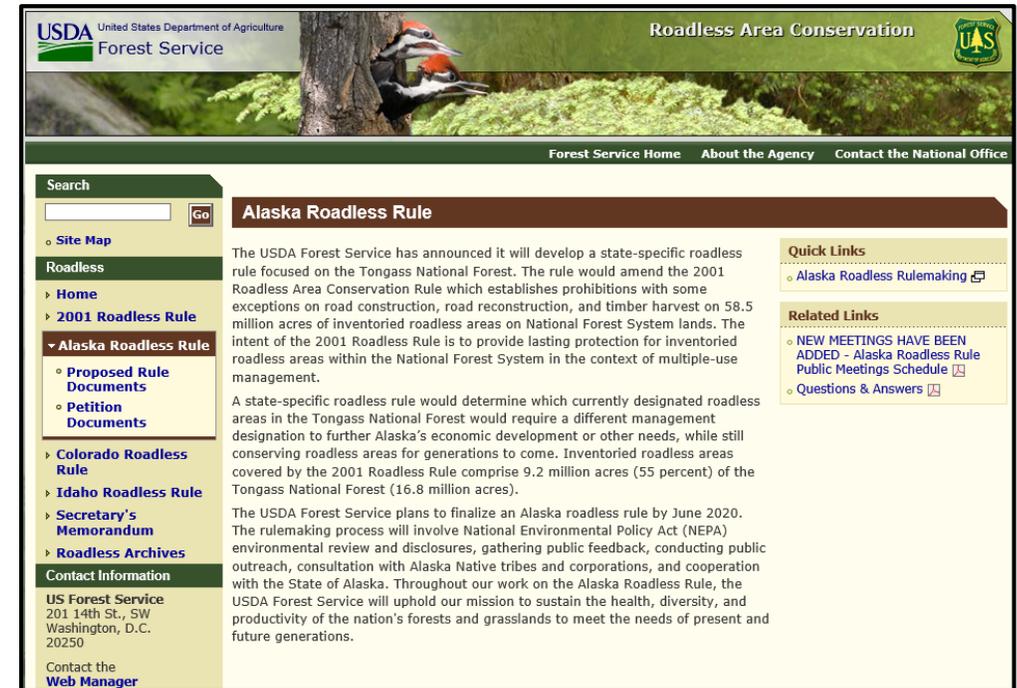
Key Issue	Alternative 1 No Action	Alternative 2 Roaded Roadless	Alternative 3 Logical Extension	Alternative 4 Partial Development LUDs	Alternative 5 Full Development LUDs	Alternative 6 Full Exemption
Protect Roadless Area Characteristics	Neutral/ No Effect	Neutral/ No Effect	Very Minimal Adverse Effect	Minimal Adverse Effect	Moderate Adverse Effect	Moderate Adverse Effect
Support Local and Regional Socioeconomic Well-Being						
• Forest Products Industry	Neutral/ No Effect	Neutral/ No Effect	Very Minimal Beneficial Effect	Minimal Beneficial Effect	Minimal Beneficial Effect	Minimal Beneficial Effect
• Visitor Industry	Neutral/ No Effect	Neutral/ No Effect	Very Minimal Adverse Effect	Minimal Adverse Effect	Minimal Adverse Effect	Minimal Adverse Effect
• Fisheries Industry	Neutral/ No Effect	Neutral/ No Effect	Neutral/ No Effect	Neutral/ No Effect	Neutral/ No Effect	Neutral/ No Effect
Protect Terrestrial Habitat, Aquatic Habitat, and Biological Diversity	Neutral/ No Effect	Minimal Adverse Effect	Minimal Adverse Effect	Minimal Adverse Effect	Minimal Adverse Effect	Minimal Adverse Effect





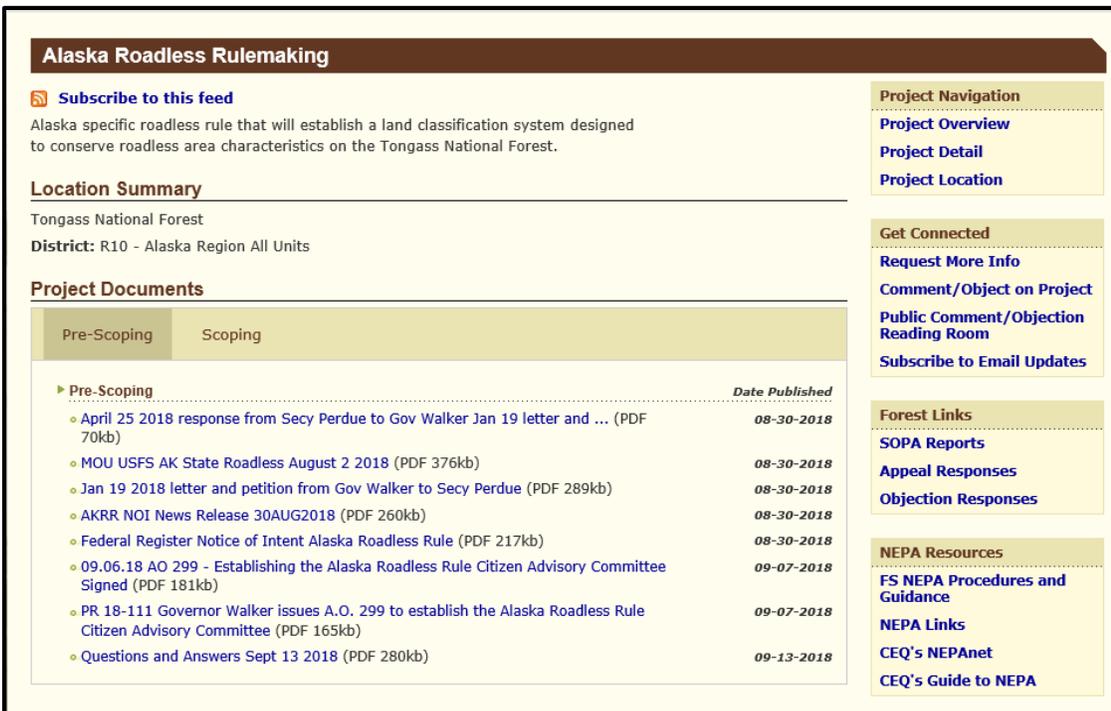
For More Information

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54511>



The screenshot shows the 'Alaska Roadless Rule' page on the Forest Service website. It features a search bar, navigation menus for 'Roadless' and 'Alaska Roadless Rule', and a main content area with text about the rule's development and implementation. There are also 'Quick Links' and 'Related Links' sections on the right side.

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/roadmain/roadless/alaskaroadlessrule>



This screenshot shows a detailed project page for the 'Alaska Roadless Rulemaking'. It includes a 'Subscribe to this feed' button, a 'Location Summary' for the Tongass National Forest, and a 'Project Documents' table. The table lists various documents with their publication dates. On the right, there are sections for 'Project Navigation', 'Get Connected', 'Forest Links', and 'NEPA Resources'.

Pre-Scoping	Scoping
<p>► Pre-Scoping <i>Date Published</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ April 25 2018 response from Secy Perdue to Gov Walker Jan 19 letter and ... (PDF 70kb) 08-30-2018 ◦ MOU USFS AK State Roadless August 2 2018 (PDF 376kb) 08-30-2018 ◦ Jan 19 2018 letter and petition from Gov Walker to Secy Perdue (PDF 289kb) 08-30-2018 ◦ AKRR NOI News Release 30AUG2018 (PDF 260kb) 08-30-2018 ◦ Federal Register Notice of Intent Alaska Roadless Rule (PDF 217kb) 08-30-2018 ◦ 09.06.18 AO 299 - Establishing the Alaska Roadless Rule Citizen Advisory Committee Signed (PDF 181kb) 09-07-2018 ◦ PR 18-111 Governor Walker issues A.O. 299 to establish the Alaska Roadless Rule Citizen Advisory Committee (PDF 165kb) 09-07-2018 ◦ Questions and Answers Sept 13 2018 (PDF 280kb) 09-13-2018 	

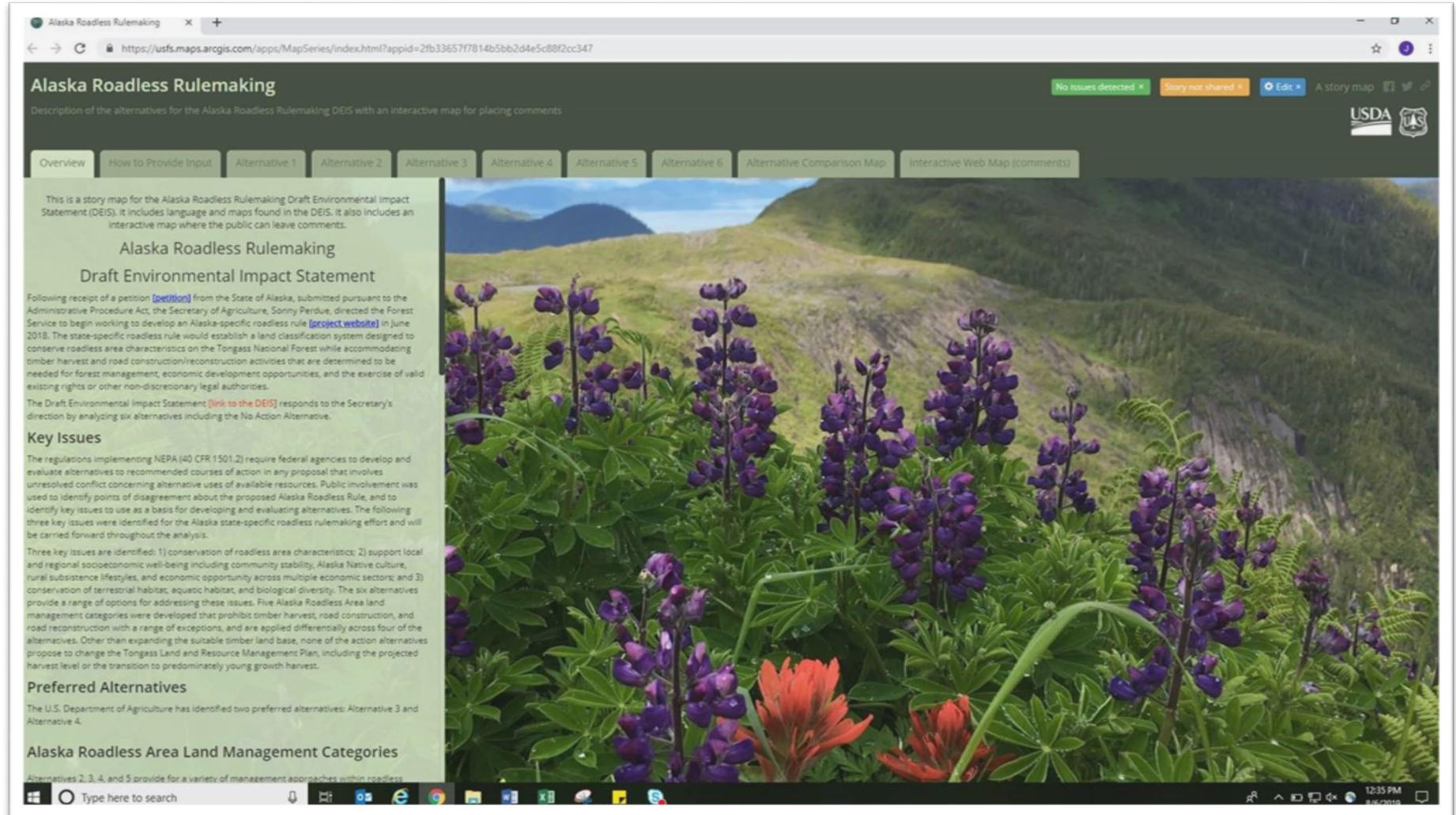




United States Department of Agriculture

Story Map Online Tool

<https://arcg.is/1WObPL>



Forest Service



How to Comment

Comments must be submitted in writing by December 17, 2019.

- On the internet at: www.regulations.gov
- Project website: www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54511
- Mail to: USDA Forest Service, Attn: Alaska Roadless Rule, P.O. Box 21628, Juneau, Alaska 99802
- akroadlessrule@usda.gov
- Provide written comments to agency staff at this meeting.





Next Steps

**Public
Comment
Period Closes
December 17,
2019.**

Alaska Roadless Rulemaking Timeline



Next Step	Estimated Timeframe
Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and Proposed Alaska Roadless Rule Available	October 2019
DEIS Public Comment Period	October – December 2019
DEIS Public Meetings and Subsistence Hearings	November 2019
DEIS to FEIS Work	December 2019 – March 2020
Tribal and Alaska Native Consultation	Ongoing
Public Outreach Activities	Ongoing
Final Environmental Impact Statement Published	Late Spring/Early Summer 2020
Secretary of Agriculture Determines Which Alternative Becomes the Final Rule	Summer 2020
Final Alaska Roadless Rule Published	Summer 2020

