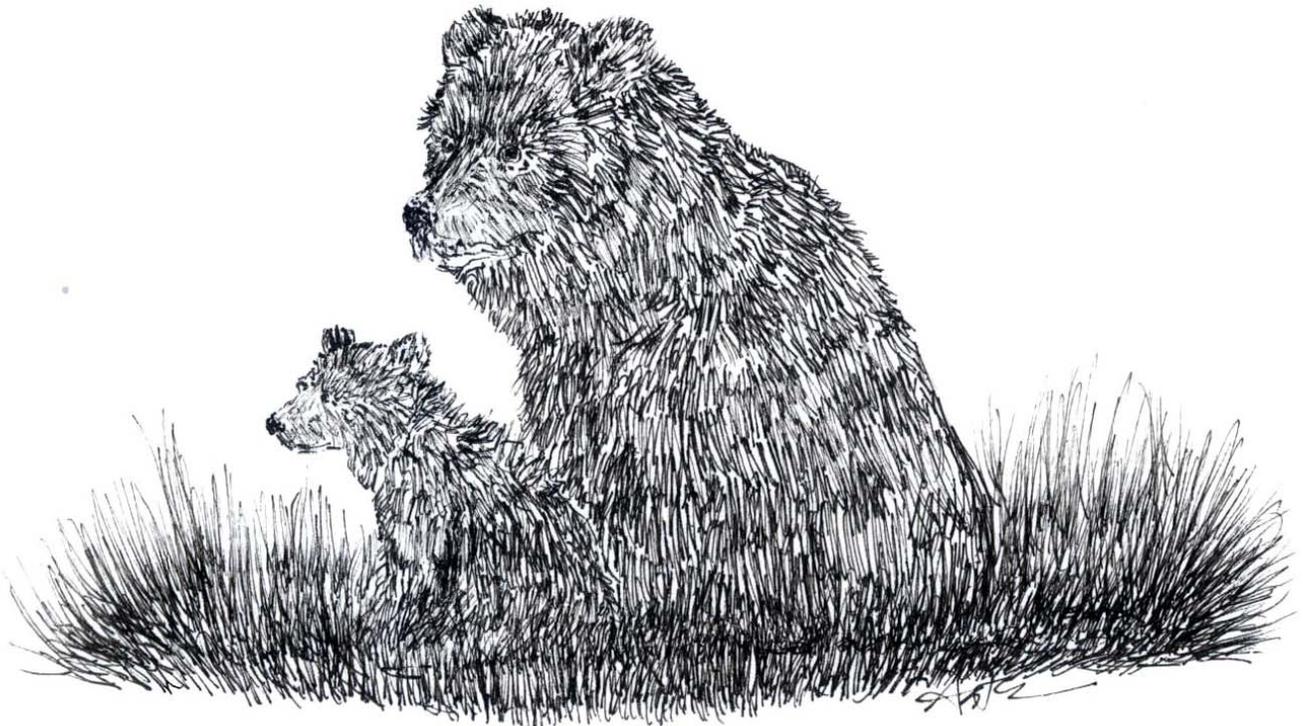




United States
Department of
Agriculture
Tongass
National Forest
R10-MB-700
June 2009



Wrangell Outfitter and Guide Management Plan Environmental Assessment



Abbreviations and Common Acronyms

ACMP	Alaska Coastal Management Plan	NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
ADF&G	Alaska Department of Fish and Game	NFS	National Forest System
ADGC	Alaska Department of Government Coordination	NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
AIRFA	American Indian Religious Freedom Act	NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
ANCSA	Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act	NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
ANILCA	Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act	ROS	Recreation Opportunity Spectrum
BMP	Best Management Practices	RSNT	Remote Setting Nature Tours
CCR	Recreation Use Carrying Capacity Report	RVD	Recreation Visitor Day
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality	SEW	South Etoin Wilderness
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations	SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
CZMA	Coastal Zone Management Act	SLW	Stikine-LeConte Wilderness
DMLW	Division of Land, Mining, Land and Water	SOPA	Schedule of Proposed Actions
DN	Decision Notice	SUA	Special Use Authorization
EA	Environmental Assessment	T&E	Threatened and Endangered
ESA	Environmental Species Act	TLMP	Tongass Land Management Plan
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact	TNF	Tongass National Forest
FS	Forest Service	TTRA	Tongass Timber Reform Act
FSH	Forest Service Handbook	USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
FSM	Forest Service Manual	VCU	Value Comparison Unit
IDT	Interdisciplinary Team	WA	Wilderness Area
LNT	Leave No Trace	WCA	Wrangell Cooperative Association
LUD	Land Use Designation	WRD	Wrangell Ranger District
NAGPRA	Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act		



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Alaska Region
Tongass National Forest
Wrangell Ranger District

P.O. Box 51
Wrangell, AK 99929-0051
Phone: (907) 874-2323
Fax: (907) 874-7595

File Code: 1950-1

Date: June 17, 2009

Dear Planning Participant:

Enclosed is your copy of the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Outfitter and Guide Management Plan on the Wrangell Ranger District, Tongass National Forest. This document describes the no-action alternative, and two action alternatives. Alternative 3 is the preferred alternative; however, please review all alternatives since any alternative, combination of alternatives, or a new alternative within the range of these alternatives may be selected in the final decision.

Since the distribution of the project's scoping letter in June 2008, the Proposed Action has been further developed to consider whether any of the study areas are approaching or have crossed a threshold that may lead to potential conflicts between resources or recreation users. The interdisciplinary team (IDT) identified one possible future concern – a diminished recreation experience for guided steelhead fishing in the Bradfield Canal and on Anan Creek. To address this concern and preserve the current recreation experience in these areas, it is proposed that 44 Recreation Visitor Days (RVDs) in the Bradfield Canal and 22 RVDs on Anan Creek are specifically allocated to commercial users for guided steelhead fishing.

As the Responsible Official for this project, I will make the decision on how to manage the outfitter and guide special use program by allocating a portion of the total recreation carrying capacity for commercial use while taking into account the needs of unguided users and forest resources.

Comments on this EA should be provided prior to the close of the comment period and should clearly articulate the reviewer's concerns and contentions. The submission of timely and specific comments can affect a reviewer's ability to participate in subsequent administrative or judicial review.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be part of the public record for this project. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, anonymous comments will not provide the respondent with standing to participate in subsequent administrative or judicial review.

The 30-day comment period on the EA will begin on the date the Notice of Availability is published in the *Ketchikan Daily News*, the newspaper of record. A public notice will also be placed in the *Petersburg Pilot* and the *Wrangell Sentinel*, the weekly newspapers in Petersburg and Wrangell, Alaska.

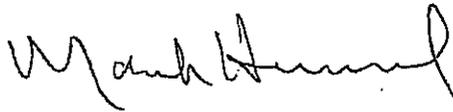
Please send written comments to the Wrangell District Ranger, or Diane O'Brien, Special Use Administrator, Attn. Wrangell Outfitter and Guide Management Plan, U.S. Forest Service, PO Box 51, Wrangell, AK, 99929-0051. Comments may also be e-mailed to comments-alaska-



tongass-wrangell@fs.fed.us, with Wrangell Outfitter and Guide Management Plan in the subject line.

If you need additional information or would like additional copies of the EA, please call the Wrangell Ranger District at (907) 874-2323. The document can also be accessed online at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/tongass/projects/projects.shtml>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Hummel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

MARK HUMMEL
District Ranger

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Camping in the Stikine-LeConte Wilderness. Photograph by Karen Dillman.

CHAPTER 1 – PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

Document Structure

The Wrangell Ranger District, Tongass National Forest, has prepared this Environmental Assessment (EA) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other relevant Federal and State law and regulation. This EA discloses the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts that would result from the proposed action and alternatives. The document has four chapters plus appendices:

- Chapter 1 – Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action. This chapter includes information on the history of the project proposal, the purpose and need for the project, and the agency’s proposal for achieving that purpose and need. It also details how the Forest Service informed the public of the proposal and how the public responded.
- Chapter 2 – Alternatives. This chapter provides a more detailed description of the agency’s proposed action as well as alternative methods for achieving the stated purpose based on significant issues raised by the public and other agencies. This discussion also includes possible mitigation measures. Finally, this chapter provides a summary table of the environmental considerations associated with each alternative.
- Chapter 3 – Environmental Considerations. Organized by resource area, this chapter describes the environmental effects of implementing the proposed action and other alternatives.
- Chapter 4 – References and Lists. This chapter provides a glossary, list of preparers and EA recipients and references.
- Appendices. These provide more detailed information to support the analyses presented in the EA.

The project record, located at the Wrangell Ranger District (WRD) office in Wrangell, AK, has additional documentation and more detailed analyses of project area resources.

Background

Outfitting and guiding services are a permitted activity on National Forest System (NFS) lands under a variety of laws established by Congress. National policy allows the Forest Service (FS) to issue either temporary or priority special use permits to qualified outfitters and guides. Temporary special use permits are issued for less than one year. Priority special use permits may be issued for up to ten years (FSH 2709.11, Chapter 40).

This 2009 EA replaces the Wrangell Ranger District portion of the 1997 Stikine Area Outfitter and Guide EA. It will not address or authorize assigned sites¹, ground disturbing

¹ An *assigned site* is a specific site designated and authorized for use by a permit holder.

1 Purpose and Need

activities, and other forms of development. These activities will require a site specific analysis.

This NEPA analysis will help the WRD decide how recreation visitor capacity will be allocated to outfitters and guides by considering the long-term and cumulative effects of issuing temporary and priority use permits. In allocating visitor capacity, the FS will consider uses that serve the public need for outfitter and guide services in ways that protect the natural and cultural resources of the area, and the more primitive social setting desired for an “Alaskan experience”.

History of the project

In 2004 a review of the 1997 Stikine Area Outfitter and Guide EA was completed to take into account the growth of the outfitter and guide industry. All recommended changes were minor. Calculations or numbers were corrected based on better information or to address public concerns. No change required any further environmental analysis or was significant enough to require a new Decision Notice.

Since the 2004 review, actual use of the WRD by the outfitter and guide industry has continued to increase (see Table 3.2). To examine the district's ability to accommodate growth, a carrying capacity study (the Wrangell Recreation Use Carrying Capacity Report) was completed in June 2009. These capacity numbers estimated how many people could use a given area annually and the results were used to help formulate alternatives responsive to the issues identified in scoping (see Chapter 2 for alternatives).

The 2009 Wrangell Recreation Use Carrying Capacity Report showed that despite an increase in commercial use of Forest Service lands, the use has not exceeded capacity and there is room for additional growth of the outfitter and guide industry in some areas.

There have been some changes in allocation of RVDs by study area and study area acres since the 1997 Stikine Area Outfitter and Guide EA and the 2004 update². Other changes incorporated into this EA include:

- The Anan Wildlife Observatory is included in this analysis. It was previously analyzed in the 1996 Anan Management Standards EA but not in the 1996 Carrying Capacity Report.
- There is now direction from the Forest Supervisor to conduct district level determinations of need for commercial services within Wilderness Areas on the Tongass National Forest prior to issuing outfitter and guide permits in Wilderness (Wilderness Act, FSH 2709.11 41.53e, USDA 2007).
- Some of the study area boundaries changed as a result of new information and use data from the last four years.
- There were boundary changes made to the recreation places which fall within and make up the larger study areas. These changes were due to land status changes, a re-evaluation of recreation attractors, new information, and recent historical use data. As a result, there are 33,400 fewer recreation place acres today than when the 2004 update was completed.

² These changes are listed in Table D of the 2009 Recreation Use Carrying Capacity Report for Wrangell Ranger District.

- There are 135,799 more net RVDs available today than when the 2004 update was completed. Table D in Appendix A and Appendix D provide explanations for RVD changes by study area.

Purpose and Need for Action ---

The purpose of this initiative is to:

- Respond to special use permit applications;
- Allocate appropriate outfitter and guide use in the Stikine-LeConte and South Etolin Wilderness Areas while protecting wilderness character (based on individual Determination of Need for Commercial Services); and
- Allocate outfitter and guide recreation use on the Wrangell District to minimize potential impacts to all resources

This action is needed to analyze the potential impacts of outfitter and guide use on NFS lands and to set reasonable levels of use based on social and environmental conditions. This action responds to the goals and objectives outlined in the Tongass Forest Plan, and helps move the WRD towards the desired conditions described in the plan (USDA 2008a, p. 2-1). The Forest Plan provides standards and guidelines to authorize the services of qualified outfitters and guides to the public where the need for the service has been identified, is compatible with the objectives and management direction of the affected Land Use Designation (LUD) (USDA 2008a, p. 4-46) and to issue priority use permits, whenever possible, supplemented with temporary permits (id.).

Forest Service policy (FSM 2720 and FSH 2709.11) allows for the issuance of special use authorizations for up to 10 years. Applications for multi-year permits allow outfitters and guides to make financial commitments necessary to continue to provide service to the public.

If there is a demonstrated need for commercial service(s) and these services are deemed appropriate for the Wilderness area proposed, the FS may issue Special Use Authorizations (SUAs) to individual(s) or organization(s) (USDA 2008a, p. 3-20) to provide the said service(s). In 2007, the Forest Supervisor made a determination of need for the services of outfitters and guides within Wilderness Areas to meet recreational purposes on the Tongass. The WRD has written two Wilderness Needs Assessments: one specific to the Stikine-LeConte Wilderness (SLW) and one for the South Etolin Wilderness (SEW). Both assessments are located in the project record.

The proposed action will enhance the ability of the FS to review and process outfitter and guide requests more efficiently.

Project Area Description ---

The project area consists of the National Forest System lands encompassing the Wrangell Ranger District of the Tongass National Forest (TNF), totaling approximately 1.7 million acres in central Southeast Alaska. Located within the Alexander Archipelago, the project area extends westward from the Canadian border to Zarembo Island and ranges to just north of LeConte Bay to the southern end of Etolin Island. A map displaying the project

1 Purpose and Need

area is presented in Figure 1. For the purpose of this project, the district is divided into study areas³.

Proposed Action

The action proposed by the FS to meet the purpose and need is to allocate visitor use (guided and non-guided) based on the 2009 Wrangell Recreation Use Carrying Capacity Report and the SLW and SEW Determinations of Need for Commercial Services. Study area use will be evaluated to determine any conflicts or potential future conflicts between resources or recreation users.

This proposed action authorizes the issuance of commercial outfitter/guide permits for the WRD. The proposed action would allocate outfitter and guides up to 10 percent of a study area's capacity within an identified home range, and up to 25 percent of a study area's capacity outside of an identified home range. Overall, the proposal would allocate up to approximately 37,009 Recreation Visitor Days (RVDs) for outfitter and guide use on the WRD.

All outfitted and guided operations will be subject to area-wide and site-specific mitigation measures to protect natural and historic resources of the TNF and balance allocated use between guided and non-guided users.

For those operators who have demonstrated satisfactory performance, the District Ranger may issue priority permits based on the allocation, for a period of up to 10 years, in accordance with FSH 2709.11, Chapter 40.

There are four exceptions to the 10 percent and 25 percent proposed action:

- The 1996 Anan Management Standards Environmental Assessment (EA) evaluated the Anan Wildlife Observatory, and therefore was not part of the 1997 Outfitter and Guide EA or the update in 2004. However, the 2009 Wrangell CCR calculations include Anan's shoulder season (before and after the high use season of July 5 through August 25). No changes to the existing high use visitor season, which allows 64 visitors a day during the 52-day peak season, are proposed.
- In the South Etolin Wilderness area, the commercial sector will be allocated 10 percent, rather than 25 percent, of the net RVDs. The Wilderness area is outside the home range of Wrangell, but due to high historical use, site impacts, and the desire to maintain Wilderness character, less commercial use will be allocated.
- Ten recreation places⁴, due to high acreages, resulted in high RVD allocation to the commercial sector. In these recreation places, up to ten percent of the

³ *Study area* Study area boundaries were determined using the Forest Plan, Value Comparison Units (VCUs), ROS Classes (2008 Forest Plan, Appendix I), and Watershed Analysis Areas. In some instances study area and recreation place boundaries were revised to better represent where use is occurring and to group lands according to their location. These changes are documented in Table D of Appendix A.

⁴ These include recreation places 22092.04, 22092.07, 22094.08 in study area 80; recreation places 22043.00, 22043.02, 22043.03, 22043.04, 22043.05 and 22043.12 in study area 90; and recreation place 22089.01 in study area 140.

available commercial use RVDs may be allocated to outfitters and guides⁵. This will not result in any allocations below the level of historical use.

- In recreation places 22002.00, 22005.00 and 22017.00 (study area 50, Bradfield Canal) and recreation place 22012.00 (study area 60, Anan) use allocated to commercial steelhead fishing guides will be 44 RVDs in the Bradfield Canal and 22 RVDs on Anan Creek. This is an effort to preserve the current recreation experience in these areas.

Decision Framework

The Wrangell District Ranger will decide how to manage the outfitter and guide special use program by allocating a portion of the total recreation use carrying capacity for commercial use while taking into account the needs of unguided users and forest resources. In order to maintain a quality recreation experience and balance between guided and unguided use, the District Ranger will also decide what level of guided use will trigger additional review by study area. Recreation use for any given recreation place⁶ will not be established by this document.

Given the purpose and need, the District Ranger will review the proposed action and the other alternatives in order to make the following decisions:

- The locations, limitations, management, and terms of outfitter and guide permits and opportunities on the WRD for the next five to ten years;
- The extent, type, amount, and location of commercial use to allocate within the Stikine-LeConte and South Etolin Wilderness Areas;
- How best to manage outfitter and guide use on the WRD to minimize potential impacts to all resources; and
- What, if any, mitigation measures and monitoring are needed.

The District Ranger will not address proposals for development⁷ received through the application process in this document. Development proposals, authorized under different Forest Service authorities and policies, are beyond the scope of this analysis.

The decision will be implemented through the Special Uses administrative process. Commercial use permits will be authorized under the direction of the Special Uses Management Manual (FSM 2700) and Handbook (FSH 2709.11). Mitigation measures will be implemented through permit requirements and provisions, and administration and program monitoring. Monitoring will occur during and after the administration of Special Use permits and as part of program monitoring.

⁵ In addition to ten aforementioned recreation places, there are four more adjusted to ten percent of the available commercial use RVDs to take into account a sensitive ecosystem (22094.06 in study area 80) or to maintain the prescribed recreation experience (22026.32 in study area 10; 22054.03 in study area 130; and 22088.01 in study area 140).

⁶ *Recreation places* are areas used for recreation activities and are easy to access. They are identified based on patterns of use associated with protected boat anchorages and landings, aircraft landing sites, and roads; for example, beaches or campgrounds.

⁷ *Development* would include construction of resorts, cabins, tent platforms, or any other structure or facility.

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Outfitter/guide activities involving the taking of fish or game will be implemented under Alaska Board of Game, Alaska Board of Fisheries, and Federal Subsistence Board regulations.

When commercial use in specific study areas approaches the allocated levels, commercial requests for use may be redirected to other locations. If this measure is not sufficient to accommodate demand, resulting in a competitive interest, permits will be allocated among qualified outfitter/guides through a competitive process.

Scoping

Schedule of Proposed Activities

The Wrangell Outfitter and Guide Environmental Assessment was listed on the Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA) in April 2008.

Open Houses

On May 5, 2008, the Petersburg Ranger District hosted an open house at the district office. A second open house was hosted in Kake on July 8, 2008. A draft of Petersburg and Wrangell's study area maps were posted for viewing at both locations. WRD received no written comments.

Government-to-Government consultation

In June 2008, Forest Service personnel attended a Wrangell Cooperative Association (WCA) meeting to consult with the tribe on this project and distributed the scoping letter. The district received no comments regarding this project from the WCA.

Scoping Letter

In June 2008, WRD mailed approximately 360 scoping letters requesting comments on the proposed action.

Response to Scoping

WRD received four responses from the public; however, no significant issues were identified. The responses regarded these general subjects:

- Remove restrictions on the guided and unguided group size in Wilderness Areas;
- At Anan, allow guiding companies' group size restriction to be equivalent to the area's group size restriction;
- Additional information and project clarification requests

Issues

Key Issues

Key issues help define or predict the resources or uses that could be most affected by the management of NFS lands. These issues are used as a basis to formulate management alternatives or to measure differences between alternatives.

Non-significant issues were those identified as:

- 1) Outside the scope of the proposed action;
- 2) Already decided by law, regulation, Forest Plan, or other higher level decision;
- 3) Irrelevant to the decision(s) to be made; or
- 4) Conjectural and not supported by scientific or factual evidence.

The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) NEPA regulations require this delineation in Sec. 101.7 "...identify, and eliminate from detailed study the issues which are not significant or which have been covered by prior environmental review (Sec 1506.3)..." A list of non-significant issues and reasons regarding their categorization as non-significant is in the project record.

With regard to key issues, the WRD identified three topics. These issues include:

- *Issue 1: The proposed action may not adequately provide for the demand of recreation opportunities of the guided and unguided forest users.*
 - **Measurement.** Comparison of alternatives will include the percentage of total RVDs available to guided users for each study area.
- *Issue 2: The proposed action may not provide stable business opportunities for the outfitter and guide industry.*
 - **Measurement.** Comparison of alternatives will include the ability to issue priority use permits to qualified operators to provide an opportunity for reasonable growth in the industry.
- *Issue 3: The proposed action may not adequately protect potentially affected forest resources.*
 - **Measurement.** Comparison of alternatives will include an estimation of the relative, potential impacts to forest resources, with mitigation, if applicable.

Meetings and Consultation with Other Agencies

State of Alaska – Department of Natural Resources

The office of Project Management and Permitting coordinated a State agency review of the project. The State concurs with the Forest Service's determination of consistency with the Alaska Coastal Management Program (ACMP). See the Findings and Disclosures section of Chapter 3.

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National Marine Fisheries Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The Forest Service coordinates planning efforts with the National Marine Fisheries Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to protect threatened, endangered, and candidate species on National Forest lands. This coordination assures the continued protection of important habitat.

On March 17, 2009, a Forest Service Aquatics specialist discussed the appropriate course of action regarding an Essential Fish Habitat determination for this project's proposal with a Fisheries Biologist at the National Marine Fisheries Service. The project, potential effects to EFH, and the analysis conducted and documented in the EA were explained. The NMFS Fisheries Biologist agreed the potential effects were minimal and suggested an official EFH determination in the EA was not necessary. The Chapter 3 section in this EA documenting effects to aquatic resources was sufficient for the agency's review. However, a follow-up conversation with a Tongass National Forest Fisheries Biologist suggested including an official EFH determination highlighting the agreement between the USDA Forest Service (Alaska Region) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (document is filed in the project record). A 30-day comment period, initiating the consultation process, will begin when NMFS receives a copy of this EA with the EFH determination.

State of Alaska – State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)

SHPO reviews compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, a process to determine the effects of alternatives on heritage resources.

Federal and State Permits, Licenses and Certifications

Prior to implementation of the proposed allocation of RVDs to outfitters and guides, various permits need to be obtained from other Federal and State agencies. Some permits are already in place; others would have to be obtained.

Prior to outfitting and guiding on NFS lands, the State requires:

- that commercial outfitters and guides are state licensed, regardless of where they are operating;
- any operator that uses state lands in the course of their commercial activities must either register with the Alaska Department of Natural Resource, Division of Mining, Land and Water (DMLW) under 11 AAC 96.018, or obtain a permit under AS 38.05.850 or lease under AS 38.05.070. More information on commercial day-use registration and DMLW authorizations may be found at http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/mlw/permit_lease/index.cfm; and
- the operator must also be in compliance with outfitter and guide regulations issued by the Alaska Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development which address operations primarily occurring on state tidelands and related incidental activities occurring on federal uplands. Regulation details can be found at <http://www.dced.state.ak.us/occ/pgui5.htm>.

Outfitter and Guide Permit Conditions

Permitted activities include, but are not limited to: photography, sightseeing, hiking, kayaking, canoeing, wildlife viewing, flying tours, power boating, fishing, hunting, and interpretive services. Short-term overnight camping may also occur when no leveling or ditching of campsites is made, with a party size of 12 or fewer, when Leave No Trace⁸ practices are used, and the permit includes the R10-X117 Archaeological-Paleontological Discoveries Clause. This analysis will not address or authorize development of new recreation structures, ground disturbing activities or activities that involve any type of collecting, such as beachcombing.

Outfitters and guides operate under National Forest System permits that include several heritage resource stipulations. Outfitters and guides, who are also responsible for the actions of their clients, are prohibited from collecting artifacts or disturbing heritage resources. Outfitters and guides have an affirmative responsibility to report heritage resource discoveries made in the course of their business. Outfitters and guides must comply with all federal laws and regulations including the National Historic Preservation Act, the Archaeological Resources Protection Act and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. Non-compliance with permit stipulations could result in permit revocation and/or prosecution under the various federal statutes and regulations.

Applicable Laws and Executive Orders

Shown below is a partial list of Federal laws and executive orders pertaining to project-specific planning and environmental analysis on Federal lands. While most pertain to all Federal lands, some of the laws are specific to Alaska. Disclosures and findings required by these laws and orders are contained in Chapter 3 of this EA.

- The Alaska Coastal Management Act of 1977
- Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) of 1971
- Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) of 1980 - includes a variety of provisions with direct or indirect implications for recreation management on national forests such as access, traditional activities in wilderness, and taking of fish and wildlife.
- American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978
- Archeological Resource Protection Act of 1979
- Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940 (as amended)
- Clean Air Act of 1970 (as amended)
- Clean Water Act of 1977 (as amended)
- Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) of 1972 (as amended)
- Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 (as amended)

⁸ Go to: http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/outdoor_ethics/leave_no_trace/intro/lnt_principles_v2.shtml and LNT main website (http://www.geocities.com/yosemite/falls/9200/leave_no_trace.html) for more information about Leave No Trace practices.

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- Executive Order 11593 (cultural resources)
- Executive Order 11988 (floodplains)
- Executive Order 11990 (wetlands)
- Executive Order 12898 (environmental justice)
- Executive Order 12962 (aquatic systems and recreational fisheries)
- Executive Order 13007 (American Indian sacred sites)
- Executive Order 13084 (consultation and coordination with tribal governments)
- Executive Order 13112 (Invasive plant species)
- Executive Order 13175 (government-to-government consultation)
- Executive Order 13186 (migratory bird protection)
- Executive Order 13443 (hunting heritage and wildlife conservation)
- Federal Cave Resource Protection Act of 1988
- Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1964 - “assists in preserving, developing, and assuring accessibility to all citizens of the United States of America...such quality and quantity of outdoor recreation resources as may be available and are necessary and desirable...by providing funds for federal acquisition of certain lands and other areas.” This act also provides for collection of recreation use fees for recreation sites, facilities, equipment, or services.
- Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1996
- Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (amended 1936 and 1972)
- Multiple-Use and Sustained-Yield Act of 1960 - clarifies the purposes for which national forests were established, which include outdoor recreation, range, timber, watershed, wildlife, and fish.
- Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) of 1990
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (as amended)
- National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended)
- National Trails System Act of 1968 - established a national system of recreation, scenic and historic trails “in order to provide for the ever-increasing outdoor recreation needs of an expanding population.”
- National Transportation Policy (2001)
- Organic Act of 1897 - instructs the Secretary of Agriculture to preserve and regulate occupancy and use of the national forest.
- Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899

- Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968, amended 1986 - established a system to preserve rivers with “outstandingly remarkable” scenic, recreational, geological, fish and wildlife, historical, cultural, or other similar values.
- Wilderness Act of 1964 (as amended) - 1964—established the National Wilderness Preservation System, consisting of federal lands designated among other purposes, to preserve their “primeval character and influence.”

Availability of the Project Record

An important consideration in preparation of this EA has been reduction of paperwork as specified in 40 CFR 1500.4. In general, the objective of the EA is to furnish enough site-specific information to demonstrate a reasoned consideration of the environmental impacts of the alternatives. The project record contains supporting material that documents the NEPA process and analysis from the beginning of the project to the publication of the EA. The project record is located at the Wrangell Ranger District office in Wrangell, Alaska. Reference documents, such as the Forest Plan, are available for review at public libraries and Forest Service offices throughout Southeast Alaska, including the Wrangell Ranger District. The Forest Plan is available on CD-ROM and on the Internet at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/tongass/>.



Boreal toad at night near Wrangell, Alaska. Photograph by Susan Wise-Eagle.

1 Purpose and Need

Wrangell Ranger District Study Areas Figure 1

50 Study Area Boundary

Water

