Alaska Solitude
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LEGEND
- National Forest Boundary
- International Boundary
- Provincial Boundary
- Monument, Park or Wilderness Boundary
- State or Provincial Highway
- Railroad
- Road
- Scheduled Jet Service
- Scheduled Non Jet Service
- National Forest
- National Forest Monument
- National Forest Wilderness
- National Forest Monument Wilderness
- National Park
- National Wildlife Refuge
- Indian Reservation
- Regional Headquarters
- Forest Supervisors Headquarters
- District Ranger Station

Map prepared by R-10 Cartographics from USGS base, 1981.
Alaska Solitude
Wilderness Areas of the Tongass National Forest

On December 2, 1980, the President signed the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), designating areas of Alaska totaling nearly 103 million acres (an area about the size of the entire State of California) as national parks, wildlife refuges, wilderness areas, wild and scenic rivers, and other conservation areas. Of this, over 5 million acres of new Wilderness Areas are located in Southeast Alaska within the Nation’s largest National Forest — the Tongass.

The following pages briefly describe each of the newly designated Wilderness Areas on the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska. Most of these areas are remote — accessible only by watercraft or aircraft. Their enchanting coastlines, snowy peaks, glaciers, and rainforest glades beckon.

Safety
Safety needs a word. In the “old days” thorough preparation and caution, using simple equipment and common sense, was a natural part of living and working in the wilderness of Southeast Alaska. Since then, conditions have changed little. Safety is still a matter of individual responsibility and is based on thorough knowledge of what to expect, the right equipment, and common sense.

Cabins
The two National Forests in Alaska, the Tongass in the Southeast panhandle and the Chugach near Anchorage, maintain a system of 170 remote cabins (some located in Wilderness Areas) that can be reserved at a cost of $10 per night. Most of the cabins are in remote areas and getting there can be the main expense. The Forest Service also maintains campgrounds and trails.

For More Information
The Forest Service offices listed below can provide information on local conditions and cabins.

USDA Forest Service, Alaska Region
P.O. Box 1628, Juneau, AK 99802
TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST
CHATHAM AREA
P.O. Box 1980, Sitka, AK 99835
TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST
KETCHIKAN AREA
Federal Bldg., Ketchikan, AK 99901
TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST
STIKINE AREA
P.O. Box 309, Petersburg, AK 99833
CHUGACH NATIONAL FOREST
2221 E. Northern Lights Blvd.
Suite 238, Anchorage, AK 99508

And More Information
The Alaska State Division of Tourism, Pouch E, Juneau, Alaska 99811, can provide information for planning wilderness adventures. You can design your own vacation utilizing the Alaska Marine Highway System (Ferries), commercial airways, and roads.

Or you can contact commercial tour agencies and professional guides, which offer services ranging from trip planning to ship cruises, cruises in smaller boats, wilderness canoe trips, and guided hunting and fishing trips.

Nautical charts (for the coastline and waters) and U.S. Geological Survey contour maps (for land) portray detail of landform and waterways. Bookstores, marine supply centers, and outdoor supply stores often carry or can order maps and charts.

Multiple Use Management — A Balanced Approach
The 5 million acres of Wilderness in Southeast Alaska are only a small part of the wild and beautiful National Forest lands in Alaska. It is not necessary to visit an official Wilderness to have a wilderness experience on either the Tongass or Chugach National Forest. National Forests are managed under the concept of multiple use and provide a variety of products and recreational opportunities, with the longterm goal of protecting the land and its productivity for future generations.

Forest Service responsibilities stem from several acts passed by Congress during the past 75 years. One of the most important of these is the Multiple Use-Sustained Yield Act of 1960. This Act requires that all resources on the national forests be managed to provide the best mix of resources to meet the needs and desires of the nation and its people. Wildlife and fish are considered equally with the recreation, timber management, minerals, watershed, and other programs.

Multiple use management does not mean that all resources are given equal consideration on the same acre of land. It does mean that, on a given national forest, resources will be allocated to provide a blending of benefits and uses that best respond to the needs and demands of the public. This includes many areas (outside of official Wilderness) that are retained in their natural “wild” condition.

Wilderness
Designated Wilderness Areas, although compatible with certain uses (such as recreation and watershed), are set aside through special acts of Congress. The Areas described here are managed as directed by the 1964 Wilderness Act, as amended by ANILCA, which specifically authorizes certain activities. This includes provisions for subsistance use; for public recreation cabins; for certain fish habitat enhancement activities; and for use of airplanes, motorboats, and snow machines.
Wildlife and Fish

The national forests in the Alaska Region offer some of the most diverse and unique wildlife and fisheries resources in the Nation. Large areas of high quality habitat account for this abundance. Along the inland waterways, this is evidenced by bald eagles perching on spruce trees or soaring along forested slopes and the occasional humpback whale announcing its presence by a steamy spout of air.

The careful observer will see Sitka black-tailed deer or bears foraging along beach fronts, mountain goats among the steep rocky crags above timberline, and harbor seals or northern sea lions basking in the infrequent sunshine on rocky ledges along the shore.

Waterfowl abound. The Copper River Delta area, near the town of Cordova, is one of the most productive wetlands for waterfowl on the continent. The Kenai Peninsula near Anchorage is home to moose, Dall sheep, mountain goats, and wolves. Hunting is popular.

Sought after by fishermen are five species of salmon, Dolly Varden char, and cutthroat trout. Angling opportunities in both saltwater and freshwater are excellent. Coastal Alaska waters support a large commercial fisheries industry dependent upon salmon that spawn in the streams and rivers within the National Forest.

Timber Harvest

Timber harvest has occurred on what is now the Tongass National Forest since before the establishment of the National Forest System. All but a small percentage has occurred since 1950. Nearly all of the timber harvested from the two national forests in Alaska comes from the Tongass. Of course, Wilderness Areas are excluded from consideration for timber harvesting. Besides creating Wilderness, ANILCA recognized the importance of maintaining industry employment in Southeast Alaska by establishing a prescribed level of timber harvest from the Tongass National Forest of 4.5 billion board feet of timber in the next decade. This will maintain about 2,700 industry jobs in the area.

Out of about 17 million acres on the Tongass National Forest, the Tongass Land Management Plan identified about 5 million acres as commercial forest land, almost all of which is old-growth forest. This is similar in size to the acreage in Wilderness Areas. However, only about 2 million acres of this are considered available for harvesting, and only about one percent of this 2 million acres will be harvested in any given year. Thus, after 100 years, harvesting will have occurred on about 11 percent of the land on the Tongass National Forest. By this time, new forest will have replaced that harvested 100 years ago, and the cycle can begin anew, thus providing continuous employment and a continuous flow of wood products.

Sitka Black-Tailed Deer

Although timber harvesting on the Tongass involves, in the long run, only 11 percent of the land, the greatest challenge facing the Forest Service in Alaska today is in developing ways to meet both timber and wildlife goals on the same lands. Foresters, engineers, biologists, researchers, and others work together to design timber harvesting methods and compensate for habitat changes that occur when old-growth forests are harvested. As part of the solution, about 257,000 acres (nearly 12%) of the acreage capable of being harvested have been set aside to be allocated on a localized basis for specific needs such as wildlife and fish habitat. Some wildlife species, such as moose, will benefit from timber harvest. However, it must be recognized that some decreases in wildlife species dependent on old-growth habitat will occur in some areas of the national forests.

Bald Eagles

Some years ago, it was recognized that harvest of these old-growth forests could have a negative impact on nesting territories for the bald eagle. Timber harvesting practices were modified to leave nesting trees and a surrounding buffer zone. This effort has been successful in maintaining eagle habitat. Populations are near maximum and allow the capture of young eagles from Southeast Alaska for release programs in areas, such as the Eastern United States, where populations have been decimated.

Fisheries

The relationship between old-growth forest and anadromous fish habitat is not well understood. However, there is concern over the effect on water temperature if the timber canopy is removed. Stream sedimentation, which can increase for a time after harvest, is also a concern.

Habitat protection measures, incorporated into national forest harvesting practices, insure proper stream temperatures, dissolved oxygen levels, adequate cover, minimal sedimentation, and free passage for fish. Salmon harvests have increased five-fold since 1975, with a significant contribution coming from national forests, and record salmon harvests are anticipated.

Special emphasis is placed on identifying tributaries important to salmon and carrying out measures necessary to maintain or enhance productive capacity. Fisheries improvements include removal of debris jams, construction of fishways, stocking of barren lakes, and lake fertilization.

The Future

As demands for use and enjoyment of natural resources increase, we might logically ponder what changes will likely occur on the national forests in the future. Wilderness will be strictly maintained. On other lands, the Forest Service is committed to manage forests and waters in a manner that will assure the availability of natural resources, including wild and scenic recreation, for future generations.

Through Forest Service planning processes, and through State of Alaska resource agencies, the public is having the opportunity to make their needs and desires known and reflected in national forest management. This careful planning and implementation of resource management programs assures a continued sustained flow of goods and services from the national forests in Alaska to meet local and national needs.
Minimum Impact Camping

Recreationists take Wilderness as it is. Their activities should harmonize with the maintenance of natural conditions as well as with the retention of opportunities for solitude. The surge of popularity of wildland recreation in the last few years has created a boom in Wilderness use. National forest Wilderness currently receives around 8.5 million visits annually — about 22 times as much as was predicted in the earliest estimates made in 1946. In some areas, this increased use has resulted in increasing damage to the fragile Wilderness resource. In order to accomplish its charge of protecting and maintaining the Wilderness resource, the Forest Service provides information to the public about safe and environmentally sound ways of using the areas.

Rules and restrictions, though often necessary and valid, grate on our personal freedom. In the Wilderness, as elsewhere, true freedom requires a willingness to assume responsibility for one’s actions, including those that might harm the land. The following is a list of minimum impact camping and hiking techniques:

Make No-Trace Camps

- Seek ridgetop, beach, or timbered campsites
- Camp away from the main trail, lakeshores, and fragile plant communities
- Choose well-drained, rocky, or sandy campsites
- Never cut standing trees, use only fallen dead wood
- Avoid leveling or digging hip holes and drainage trenches
- Make only small safe campfires in safe areas
- Carry small firewood from timbered areas outside camp
- Take lightweight, soft shoes for around camp. Avoid trampling vegetation
- Use biodegradable soaps and wash away from water sources
- Bury human waste or fish entrails 6 inches deep. Don't bury other waste or trash (pack it out)
- Stay as quiet as possible and enjoy the quietness
- Leave radios and tape players at home
Plan Ahead To Avoid Impact

- Travel and camp in small groups
- Repackage food to reduce containers
- Take a litterbag to carry out all refuse
- Carry a stove and foods requiring little cooking
- Check with Ranger Stations for low-use areas

Travel to Avoid Impacts

- Walk single file in the center of the trail
- Stay on main trail even if wet or snow-covered
- Never short-cut switchbacks
- Travel cross-country only on rocky or timbered areas, not on fragile vegetation
- Look at and photograph, never pick or collect

Leave A No-Trace Campsite

- Pick up and pack out every trace of litter
- Erase all signs of a fire
- Replace rocks and logs where they were
- Apply the no-trace ethic elsewhere

Whatever their interests, the Alaskan Wilderness visitors will find their days in the wild lands adding up to an experience of special significance, perhaps inexplicable to another person. The Alaskan Wilderness environment will be unlike any they have ever known, and the emotional and spiritual reactions to it will be completely, uniquely theirs.
MAP NOTE: On the individual Wilderness maps, the careful viewer will see smaller units marked off and numbered. Each of these units is called a "VCU" or "Value Comparison Unit," and their boundaries usually follow easily recognizable watershed divides. The entire Tongass National Forest was divided into VCUs so that resource inventories could be conducted and value interpretations made for planning purposes. No individual maps of these areas are available.
LEGEND
1 - Endicott River Wilderness
2 - West Chicago - Yakobi Wilderness
3 - Admiralty Island National Monument Wilderness
4 - Tracy Arm - Fords Terror Wilderness
5 - South Baranof Wilderness
6 - Petersburg Creek - Duncan Salt Chuck Wilderness
7 - Stikine - LeConte Wilderness
8 - Tebenkof Bay Wilderness
9 - Coronation Island Wilderness
10 - Warren Island Wilderness
11 - Maurelle Islands Wilderness
12 - Misty Fiords National Monument Wilderness
13 - South Prince of Wales Wilderness
14 - Russell Fiord Wilderness
Endicott River Wilderness

Location: The Endicott River Wilderness comprises 98,729 acres on the Chilkat Peninsula, on the west side of Lynn Canal, 45 miles northwest of Juneau and 30 miles south of Haines, Alaska. The western alpine portion of the area bounds Glacier Bay National Park for about 40 miles.

Access: The most common access is by boat to the confluence of Endicott River and Lynn Canal, then by foot 2½ miles to the eastern boundary of the Wilderness. Boat access is often limited to spring and summer because of the dangers of winter storms in Lynn Canal. Limited air access by wheeled plane near the head of the Endicott River is possible.

Description: The area is typical of the rugged, recently glacial-influenced Chilkat Peninsula. The Endicott River, the central feature of the Wilderness, has its source in broad brush covered flats within the Chilkat Mountain Range. It then flows easterly through a deep, glacially carved river canyon. Elevations range from near sea level where the river flows into the saltwater of Lynn Canal up to 5,280 feet near Mount Young in the northwest portion of the area. The upper reaches are above timberline with active glaciers spreading over the common boundary with Glacier Bay National Park to the west and southwest.

Average annual precipitation is 92 inches with highest precipitation in the fall and the lowest through early spring (April-June).

The spruce-hemlock rainforest of the valley floor is interspersed with muskeg bogs or swampy areas typical of southeast Alaska. Much of the upper drainage is dominated by small slow-growing trees, thick brush, and alpine vegetation. The Endicott River drainage supports black and brown bears, mountain goats, and a limited number of moose. Hundreds of bald eagles use the area along the river during salmon runs. Eagle nesting density is also high. Deer are present; however, the population fluctuates due to deep snow on their limited winter range. The Endicott River supports chum, coho, and pink salmon.

Facilities: No facilities exist in the Wilderness.

Opposite — Bald eagles, common throughout Southeast Alaska, frequent rivers such as the Endicott during salmon migrations.

Left — Nothing quite as majestic nor as striking in size as a bull moose.
West Chichagof-Yakobi Wilderness

Location: The 264,747-acre Wilderness occupies the western portions of Chichagof and Yakobi Islands in the extreme northwest portion of the Alexander Archipelago of southeast Alaska.

Access: The Wilderness is accessible by boat or float plane with numerous sheltered bays along the island’s west coast providing safe anchorages.

Description: The most dramatic feature of the Wilderness is its 65-mile-long rugged Pacific coastline, characterized by exposed, windswept offshore islands and rugged, blocky highlands. Behind the barrier islands, rocks, and reefs of the outer coast lie the quiet waters of a scenic inside passage, honeycombed with bays, inlets, and lagoons as well as quiet tidal meadows and estuaries. Slopes support oldgrowth rainforests and windswept scrub forests. Rising abruptly from the ocean to 3,600 feet are peaks of the mountainous backbone of the area, an isolated satellite of the great coast range granite rock batholith.

Western hemlock and Sitka spruce forests cover about one-third of the area. Lodgepole pine and Alaska cedar grow in scattered locations, but seldom attain large size. Portions of the outer coast, particularly the offshore islands, support distinctive savanna glades under open spruce cover. Scattered alpine, muskeg, and estuarine plant communities can be found.

The area supports a wide variety of wildlife. Big game species include Sitka black-tailed deer and Alaskan brown bear. Numerous furbearers are abundant as are migrant waterfowl and marine mammals. Sea otters have been successfully reestablished at Surge and Khaz Bays. Large sea lion rookeries are found at White Sister Islands, Cape Cross, and Cape Bingham. Seals inhabit most of the coastline.

Facilities: There are heavily-used Forest Service recreation cabins at Goulding Lake at White Sulfur Springs, a geothermal spring. A third Forest Service cabin is located at Suloia Lake.

Above — Light from a setting sun penetrating between cloud layers precedes a lengthy dusk, which in midsummer lingers until midnight.

Opposite — Breathtaking, yet somehow somber beauty. Shooting stars (inset) and the yellow blossoms of silverweed in the foreground.
Admiralty Island
National Monument Wilderness

Location: Located in southeast Alaska, about 15 miles west of Juneau, Admiralty Island National Monument Wilderness encompasses 937,396 acres, or 90 percent of Admiralty Island. The island is bound on the east and north by Stephens Passage, on the west by Chatham Straits, and on the south by Frederick Sound. Angoon, a Tlingit Indian village with a population of 450 people, lies at the mouth of Mitchell Bay on the west side of Admiralty Island, adjacent to the Wilderness.

Access: Access to the area is available by boat or float plane from Juneau.

Description: Most of Admiralty has gentle, rolling topography with spruce-hemlock rainforest interspersed with small areas of muskeg. Timberline is typically at 1,500 to 2,000 feet. Above timberline the forest gradually changes to alpine-tundra with rock outcrops and permanent to semi-permanent ice fields.

Outstanding areas frequently traveled are the numerous estuarine areas of bays and inlets. Seymour Canal, the major inlet on the east side of the island supports one of the largest concentrations of bald eagles in southeast Alaska. Between Mole Harbor and Mitchell Bay is a complex of lakes and streams known as the “Admiralty Lakes and Recreation Area.” A trail system links the eight major lakes in the area and is part of the Cross-Admiralty Canoe route.

Wildlife on Admiralty Island is numerous. Sitka black-tailed deer, bald eagles, harbor seals, whales, and sea lions utilize the saltwater bays and inlets throughout the year. Trumpeter
swans are sometimes seen in Mitchell Bay. The Wilderness is noted for having one of the largest brown bear populations in southeast Alaska. So great are their numbers that the Tlingit Indians referred to the area as the "Fortress of Bears."

**Facilities:** Developed recreational facilities within the Wilderness consist of 7 trail cabins, 12 public recreation cabins, 25 miles of trail, 20 private recreation and hunting cabins, and the commercial Thayer Lake Lodge.
Above — Tracy Arm from the air. This spectacular fiord winds inland more than 30 miles. Cruise ships and tour boats visit this and Endicott Arm during summer when both have considerable floating ice.

Top Right — Inner cleft of Fords Terror; a narrow, deep, and cold passage bounded by sheer cliffs.

Right — About as close as you would want to get, even in a large boat. Glaciers “calve” without warning, sometimes creating violent waves. Icebergs have been known to roll over, as melting changes their balance, with potentially disastrous results to closely approaching boats.
Tracy Arm —
Fords Terror
Wilderness

Location: Tracy Arm — Fords Terror Wilderness, comprising 653,179 acres, is located 50 miles southeast of Juneau, and 70 miles north of Petersburg and is adjacent to Stephens Passage. The entire eastern boundary of the area is on the international boundary with Canada.

Access: Access is by boat, using Stephens Passage and entering Holkham Bay and Tracy and Endicott Arms, or by float plane from Juneau and Petersburg. Large tour vessels and smaller commercial cruise boats frequently visit Tracy Arm.

Description: Tracy and Endicott Arms are the major features of the area. Both are long, deep, and narrow fiords that penetrate more than 30 miles into the heavily glaciated Coast Mountain Range. At the head of each of these fiords are active tidewater glaciers, which continually calve icebergs into the fiords. During the summer, both fiords have considerable floating ice ranging from the size of a three-story building to hand-size pieces. The ice often forms a barrier to small boat travel.

Fords Terror is an area of sheer rock walls towering above the narrow waterway which connects it with Endicott Arm. The fiord was named for a crew member of a naval vessel who rowed into the narrow canyon at slack tide in 1889 and was caught in surging turbulent tidal currents filled with icebergs for 6 "terrifying" hours when the tide changed.

Most of the area is rugged snow and glacier-covered mountains with steeply walled valleys dotted with high cascading waterfalls. A typical southeast Alaska spruce-hemlock rainforest grows on the lower slopes. Timberline is at about 1,500 feet elevation. There are a few muskeg bogs dominated by sedges, grass, and sphagnum moss.

Mountain goats, wolverines, brown and black bears, numerous furbearers, and a few Sitka black-tailed deer inhabit the upland areas. Bald eagles and shore birds use the coastal areas. Sea lions and whales frequent the waterways, and harbor seals use floating ice at the head of the fiords for rearing of young and protection from predators.

Tlingit Indian villages once existed in the area near the terminus of Sumdum Glacier in Holkham Bay and at Sanford Cave in Endicott Arm.

Facilities: None exist within the Wilderness.
Right — South Baranof, looking out to sea.

Opposite

Above — The skiff of a larger boat at anchor settles in the tide. Tides range up to 20 feet in southeast Alaska.

Below — Sitka black-tailed deer.
South Baranof Wilderness

Location: The 319,568-acre South Baranof Wilderness is located in the southern portion of Baranof Island. It is bounded by the open ocean of the Gulf of Alaska on the west and Chatham Strait on the east.

Access: South Baranof Wilderness is accessible by boat or float plane. Numerous sheltered bays and fiords provide safe anchorages for small boats. The nearest communities are Sitka, 50 miles to the north, and Port Alexander, 20 miles to the south.

Description: High mountains rise sharply from sea level to 4,000 feet in less than 2 miles from the beach. The highest point in the area is Mt. Ada, elevation 4,528 feet. Much of the higher elevations are covered with permanent icefields and numerous active glaciers. Many of the valleys were filled by glaciers until recently, thus they have the typical U-shaped cross section. Many of the valleys display amphitheater-like cirques at their sources, hanging valleys along their walls, and dramatic waterfalls cascading down their sides near the coast. Most of the valleys empty into the heads of deep fiords that extend several miles inland from the coast.

Rainfall in portions of the area is among the highest in southeast Alaska. A weather station at Little Port Walter on the east coast of Baranof Island, immediately south of the Wilderness, has recorded yearly precipitation over 200 inches, mostly in the form of rain. Storms from September through December may have winds exceeding 100 miles per hour.

A wide variety of wildlife may be found in the area. The more common species include Sitka black-tail deer, brown bears, hair seals, and furbearers such as minks, martens, and land otters. Bird life includes bald eagles and a variety of song birds, shore birds, and marine birds. Many species of waterfowl migrate along the coastline and a few species nest in the estuarine and stream course wetlands.

Some of Baranof Island's major steelhead producing lakes and streams are found in the Wilderness. Coho, sockeye, pink and chum salmon, cutthroat and rainbow trout, and Dolly Varden char occur in some of the lakes and streams. The most notable shellfish and marine fish species are Dungeness and Tanner crab, shrimp, herring, and halibut.

Facilities: Five Forest Service cabins are maintained at Avoss, Davidoff, North Platnikof, Gar, and Rezanof Lakes.
Petersburg Creek — Duncan Salt Chuck Wilderness

Location: This Wilderness is located in the northeast portion of Kupreanof Island. The boundary of the 46,777-acre Wilderness extends from the small community of Kupreanof, directly across the Wrangell Narrows from the city of Petersburg, west through the Petersburg Creek Drainage to the salt chuck at the north end of Duncan Canal.

Access: The eastern boundary is easily reached by boat across Wrangell Narrows to Petersburg Creek. The western portion of the area is reached by boat via Duncan Canal and the salt chuck. All of the bodies of water are strongly influenced by tides; higher tides are required for safe access. Float planes can land on Petersburg Lake and in Duncan Canal Salt Chuck at higher tides. The Petersburg Lake National Recreation Trail leads into the Wilderness from salt water to Petersburg Lake.

Description: The Petersburg Creek drainage is a typical U-shaped glacier carved valley. Valley walls are steep in some areas with rock outcroppings visible. The valley sides are forested with spruce and hemlock; muskeg bogs are common at lower elevations. Wildlife of the area includes black bears, Sitka black-tail deer, wolves, numerous other furbearers, and a variety of waterfowl. All species of salmon, except the king salmon, are found in Petersburg Creek as well as Petersburg Lake and its tributaries. Dolly Varden char and cutthroat trout are also found in these waters.

Facilities: There are three Forest Service recreation cabins available; two are in the vicinity of Duncan Canal and Salt Chuck, and one is at Petersburg Lake.
Stikine-Leconte Wilderness

Location: The Stikine-LeConte Wilderness, about 448,841 acres, is located on the mainland of southeast Alaska, 6 miles east of Petersburg and 7 miles north of Wrangell. The boundary extends from Frederick Sound on the west to the Alaska-Canada boundary on the east. The eastern portion of the Wilderness is part of the Kates Needle area, a recent addition to the Tongass National Forest.

Access: The most common access is by small boat, with limited access by floatplane. The Stikine River permits access via small boat from salt water, through the southern portion of the Wilderness, across the Alaska boundary, and into the interior of Canada.

Description: The most prominent feature of the Wilderness is the Stikine River. The river is confined to a narrow valley by steep, rugged mountains. These surrounding mountains contain many active glaciers. Meltwater from the glaciers has a high silt content, thus giving the Stikine a milky appearance. The delta at the mouth of the river is 17 miles wide, being formed from numerous slow moving "braided" channels (three of which are navigable). One hot and two warm springs are found adjacent to the river.

Above — The town of Petersburg is not unlike other larger communities in southeast Alaska. Fishing, timbering, tourism; all depend in part on the Tongass National Forest, "land of many uses."

Below — Shakes Lake and a backdrop of "typically" spectacular peaks.
Alpine vegetation, including mosses, lichens, and other small plants, are found at elevations above 2,000 feet. The lower mountain slopes near salt water support a dense spruce-hemlock rainforest. In the area's eastern portion approaching the Canadian border, the rainfall decreases and the vegetation changes to stands of cottonwood with dense undergrowth. Cottonwood trees also are common on the many islands of the Stikine River. Grass flats, tidal marshes, and shifting sandbars cover the delta area.

Much of the Wilderness, particularly the Stikine River drainage, is recognized as an important fish and wildlife area. Moose, mountain goats, brown and black bears, Sitka black-tail deer, and wolves inhabit the area. The delta "flats" are a major resting and nesting area for migratory birds. A variety of fish, including king and other species of salmon are found.

Facilities: There are 13 Forest Service public use recreation cabins within the area. There is also an enclosed bathing structure at Chief Shakes Hot Springs.

Left — The mouth of the Stikine river. This river provides a variety of challenges for canoe and kayak. The Stikine's water is made cloudy by silt from glaciers.

Right — Migratory birds frequent estuaries of the Stikine River.

Below — For sport or for a living, fishing is a major activity in the waters of southeast Alaska.

Opposite — North of the Stikine lies the LeConte Glacier, with its meltwater flowing into the LeConte Bay. The LeConte is the southernmost glacier in North America flowing directly into salt water. Mountains in the LeConte Bay area are steep, and most of the upper valleys are glacier filled. Glaciers and permanent ice fields also cover most of the rugged mountains in the area's interior eastern portion.
Right —
This shell beach on an island in Tebenkof Bay is one of innumerable small beaches in southeast Alaska. Boat access to the Wilderness is across the southern portion of Chatham Strait, which is susceptible to dangerous wind and sea.

Opposite page:
Above — The most notable shellfish of the area include Dungeness crab, Tanner crab (shown), and shrimp.

Below — Tebenkof Bay.
Tebenkof Bay Wilderness

Location: The 66,839-acre Wilderness is located on the west side of Kuiu Island 50 miles southwest of Petersburg. Chatham Strait lies off its western border.

Access: Access to the area is by boat or float plane. Many of the coves are protected and provide good anchorages for small pleasure boats. However, boat access is across the southern portion of Chatham Strait near the open sea and susceptible to dangerous wind and sea.

Description: The most prominent feature of Tebenkof Bay Wilderness is the complex system of bays with many small islands, islets, and coves.

The vegetation is typical of southeast Alaska with hemlock-spruce forests at sea level blending into alpine plant communities above 2,000 feet. The area has scattered muskeg bogs, small lakes, and an abundance of small creeks. Numerous sea, shore, and land birds inhabit the area, along with black bears, wolves, smaller furbearers, and marine mammals. Many species of waterfowl migrate along the coastline with a few species nesting in the quiet waters of the estuaries and stream wetland areas. Trumpeter swans use portions of the area seasonally.

Coho, sockeye, pink, and chum salmon; cutthroat, rainbow, and steelhead trout; and Dolly Varden inhabit many of the lakes and streams. The most notable shellfish and marine fish species of the area include Dungeness and Tanner crab, shrimp, herring, and halibut.

The Tlingit occupied this area in the past. Historic Native sites such as winter villages, seasonal fishing camps and gardens have been found. The remains of fur farms, where farmers raised fox and other furbearing animals, are also evident.

Facilities: None exist.
Coronation Island Wilderness
Maurelle Islands Wilderness
Warren Island Wilderness

Location: All three of these island Wildernesses are located off the northwest coast of Prince of Wales Island, south of Kuiu Island, and north of Noyes Island. By air from Ketchikan it is 73 miles to the Maurelle Islands, 75 miles to Warren Island, and 110 miles to Coronation Island. The nearest full-service community to the three Wilderness Areas is Craig, 20 miles southeast of the Maurelle Islands. The Coronation Island Wilderness encompasses 19,232 acres; the Maurelle Islands Wilderness, 4,937 acres; and the Warren Island Wilderness, 11,181.

Access: The islands are accessible by boat or float plane. However, lack of boat anchorage and float plane landing sites on many of the islands, and exposure to winds and surf of the open water of the Gulf of Alaska, make access difficult. Warren Island is so exposed to the prevailing southeast winds that it is inaccessible for much of the year. The leeward sides of the island offer some protected coves and beaches.

Description: Warren Peak is a prominent feature of the Warren Island Wilderness as it rises abruptly from the seacoast to an elevation of 2,329 feet. The Coronation Island Wilderness includes the Spanish Island group as well as Coronation Island. Coronation has numerous peaks rising dramatically to nearly 2,000 feet. Maurelle Islands Wilderness is a group of nearly 30 islands rising less than 400 feet above sea level. A number of islets, pinnacles, and rocky shoals are found in surrounding waters. The three island Wildernesses have windswept beaches with cliffs and rocky shorelines. Trees near the water are often wind sculptured. Tall stands of spruce and hemlock are also found in more sheltered portions of the islands.

Typical wildlife on most of the islands includes wolves, black bears, Sitka black-tailed deer, and bald eagles. Sea otters are found along the coastlines, and other marine mammals, such as seals and sea lions, are common offshore and along the rocky beaches. The cliffs and rocks are important sea bird nesting and perching areas. Some of the streams provide sport fishing opportunities.

Facilities: None exist.
Above — The Maurelle Islands Wilderness is a group of nearly 30 islands rising less than 400 feet above sea level... lands of windswept beaches and rocky shorelines.

Right — Sea lions (pictured), seals, and sea otters are found along the rocky coastlines of the three Wilderness Areas.

Opposite Page:
Left — The coastline of Coronation Island rises dramatically to nearly 2,000 feet. The Coronation Island Wilderness includes the Spanish Islands group.

Right — The alpine peaks of Warren Island rise to 2,329 feet. Wolves, black bears, and deer inhabit these three Wilderness Areas.
Above — Whether associated with a Wilderness or not (Misty Fiords pictured), protected waters of the inland sea provide many opportunities for canoes and kayaks. However, because of open water, unstable weather, and wave action exaggerated by the flood and ebb of tides, conditions can change from flat calm to extremely rough in the time it takes to make a relatively modest crossing. Seek advice, be prepared, be cautious.

Top Right — Misty Fiords, located on the mainland, encompasses a wide range of geological and ecological types, from coastal to interior.

Right — Visitors are not limited to kayaks. Larger vessels also visit the Monument.

Sue Matthews
Misty Fiords National Monument Wilderness

Location: Misty Fiords National Monument Wilderness is located in southermost southeast Alaska adjacent to the Canadian border. It extends north from Dixon Entrance to beyond the Unuk River. The western boundary is 22 miles east of Ketchikan.

The National Monument is 2,285,000 acres, of which the Wilderness portion occupies 2,142,243 acres, making it the largest Wilderness in the national forests of Alaska, and the second largest in the National Forest System.

Access: Misty Fiords is readily accessible by float planes and boats.

Description: Misty Fiords is representative of the coast mountains of southeast Alaska. Within it are found nearly all of the important geological and ecological characteristics of the region, including a complete range of coastal to interior climates and ecosystems.

Among the features of geologic importance are extraordinarily deep and long fiords with sea cliffs abruptly rising thousands of feet. Active glaciers along the Canadian border are remnants of massive ice bodies that covered the region as recently as 10,000 years ago. Some of the area has been free of glaciation for only a short time, creating the unusual scientific phenomenon of recent plant succession on newly exposed land, with the accompanying animal species. Behm Canal, the major waterway through the heart of the area, is more than 100 miles long and extraordinary among natural canals for its length and depth. Periodic lava flows have
occurred for the last several thousand years in an area of the Blue River in the eastern portion of the Wilderness near the Canadian border. The latest of these flows was in the 1920s and is an attractive and unusual geologic feature.

Forested areas are predominantly Sitka spruce, western hemlock, and Alaska cedar, with minor stands of black cottonwood, sub-alpine fir, and Pacific silver fir.

Few areas of the United States contain as many unusual wildlife species. Here live populations of mountain goats, brown bears, black bears, moose, martens, wolves, wolverines, and river otters. Sea lions, harbor seals, killer whales, and Dall porpoises use the saltwater bays and passages. In addition, a large number of bird species, ranging from hummingbirds and trumpeter swans to eagles, are found in the area.

Misty Fiords is a major producer of coho, sockeye, pink, and chum salmon, and is especially important for king salmon. Numerous other saltwater, fresh water, and anadromous fish species and shellfish are plentiful in this fertile interface of marine and fresh water.

Extensive mineral prospecting has occurred in Misty Fiords. At present a deposit of molybdenum, estimated to be one of the largest in the world, is being explored adjacent to the Wilderness at Quartz Hill near the Keta River at the head of Boca de Quadra.

Fort Tongass, the first Army post established by the U.S. Government in Alaska after its purchase, was located within the Wilderness. It was occupied from 1868 to 1870.

Left — Wilson Lake... leave only footprints, take only pictures (and maybe one or two "keepers").

Right — Walker Cove. "Untrammeled by man"... this condition depends on you, the individual, to make the minimum impact possible when hiking or camping in the wildlands of Alaska, whether officially called "Wilderness" or not.

Opposite — Misty Fiords National Monument Wilderness

Facilities: The Forest Service maintains 12 recreation cabins on fresh water lakes and 3 on salt water as well as 6 salt water mooring buoys and 15 miles of trail. In addition, there is a private commercial lodge operated at Humpback Lake.
Above — Haul groceries, visit Grandmother, or go to work; for many, the float plane is an ordinary mode of transportation. Roads in southeast Alaska are few and, literally, far between. Larger prop-driven aircraft, helicopters, commercial jetliners and the Marine Highway System (State ferries) combine to form an efficient and flexible transportation system, custom designed for southeast Alaska.

ANILCA permits continuation of existing access modes in Alaska Wilderness, such as float plane.

Opposite — Barrier Islands, South Prince of Wales Wilderness.
South Prince of Wales Wilderness

**Location:** The 90,996-acre Wilderness is at the southern tip of Prince of Wales Island, about 40 miles southeast of Ketchikan, Alaska. It lies to the east of Cordova Bay in the Dixon Entrance. The first Haida Indian village in southeast Alaska, Klinkwan, is within the South Prince of Wales Wilderness. This historic village site was established in the 19th century, and abandoned in 1911.

**Access:** South Prince of Wales Wilderness is accessible by float plane and boat. Small boat access is typically limited to the summer months due to hazardous open waters of Dixon Entrance.

**Description:** The southern Barrier Islands, in Cordova Bay on the west side and near the south end of the area, are composed of about 75 small islands and innumerable smaller rocks. The islands range in size from a few acres to over 500 acres. They are exposed to fierce ocean storms that sweep in with unbroken force. As a result, the trees are stunted and windformed into unusual shapes.

Terrain on the main island is varied. The southeastern part has low, undulating topography broken by numerous streams, lakes, bays, and wetlands. By contrast, Klakas Inlet, a 12-mile-long arm of Cordova Bay, is ½ to ⅓ miles wide, with the landmass rising sharply from sea level to about 2000 feet.

Precipitation usually exceeds 100 inches per year, and vegetation includes dense stands of large old-growth Sitka spruce, western hemlock, Alaska-cedar, and western redcedar, as well as numerous shrubs, wildflowers, and grasses.

Black bears, wolves, Sitka black-tailed deer, small furbearers, land and shore birds, and bald eagles inhabit the area. Many species of waterfowl migrate along the coastline of the area, with a few species nesting in the estuarine and stream course wetlands.

Coho, sockeye, pink, and chum salmon; cutthroat and rainbow trout; and Dolly Varden char occur in many of the lakes and streams. The most notable shellfish and marine fish species are Dungeness and Tanner crab, shrimp, herring, and halibut. The ocean-influenced tidal community consists of abalone, giant barnacles, clams, large mussels, octopus, sea urchines, sea anemones, and starfish. Sea otters have been transplanted to the area and are doing well in this, one of the better sea otter habitats in southeast Alaska.

**Facilities:** None exist.
Above — Seals are at home on floating ice. Tidewater glaciers (those that end in the ocean) frequently "calve" huge chunks of ice, creating iceberg jams in Russel Fiord.

Right — The brilliant blue of icebergs is a property of ice that has formed under great pressure. Freshly exposed glacial ice contains no cracks or air bubbles that reflect light and acts as a prism, refracting only blue wavelengths while absorbing the rest.

Opposite — Mountain goats are usually seen only as white specks on mountain sides.

**Russell Fiord Wilderness**

**Location:** The Russell Fiord Wilderness of 348,701 acres lies 25 miles northeast of Yakutat between the rugged Fairweather Range to the northeast and the Brabazon Range to the southwest. The eastern boundary borders the new Brabazon Range addition to the Tongass National Forest.

**Access:** The most common form of access is by float plane from Juneau, 200 miles to the southeast, or by either float plane or boat from Yakutat, 12 miles west. In addition, there is limited access to within 2 miles of the area by road from Yakutat. Much of the area is composed of rugged peaks, glaciers, and icefields which severely restrict access.

**Description:** The most dramatic features of the Wilderness are the heavily glaciated Russell Fiord, which penetrates over 35 miles inland from Disenchantment Bay, and Nunatak Fiord, which forms a narrow, 15-mile channel to the southeast. There are numerous active glaciers above the ice-carved fiords. The area is of great scientific interest for its record of recent catastrophic geological events, post-glacial ecological succession, and the effects of frequent earthquakes.

The area displays great scenic variety. Vegetation ranges from heavily forested river channels to alpine meadows at higher elevations. Situk Lake and the headwaters of the Situk Wild and Scenic River Study Area are within the Wilderness.

Mountain goats, wolves, brown and black bears, and numerous furbearers occupy much of the area. Harbor seals and sea lions utilize the major rivers and fiords. Shore birds, song birds, waterfowl, and bald eagles are found in...
many parts of the Wilderness. Fisheries are fairly limited, with the exception of the lower reaches of Russell Fiord and the headwaters of the Ahrnklin River. The cultural history of the area is lengthy and complex as it bears traces of the Yakutat Tlingits and Chugach Eskimo culture, as well as that of the Bremner River people. Evidences of Russian occupation and the remnants of more recent fortifications of World War II provide additional interest.

Facilities: Two Forest Service cabins are located within the wilderness.
Alaska Solitude
Wilderness Areas of the Tongass National Forest

For information, contact:

Chatham Area
Tongass National Forest
P.O. Box 1980
Sitka, Alaska 99835
Admiralty Island National Monument Wilderness
Endicott River Wilderness
Russell Fiord Wilderness
South Baranof Wilderness
Tracy Arm — Fords Terror Wilderness
West Chichagof — Yakobi Wilderness

Ketchikan Area
Tongass National Forest
Federal Building
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901
Coronation Island Wilderness
Maurell Islands Wilderness
Misty Fiords National Monument Wilderness
South Prince of Wales Wilderness
Warren Island Wilderness

Stikine Area
P.O. Box 309
Petersburg, Alaska 99833
Petersburg Creek - Duncan Salt
Chuck Wilderness
Stikine - Le Conte Wilderness
Tebenkof Bay Wilderness