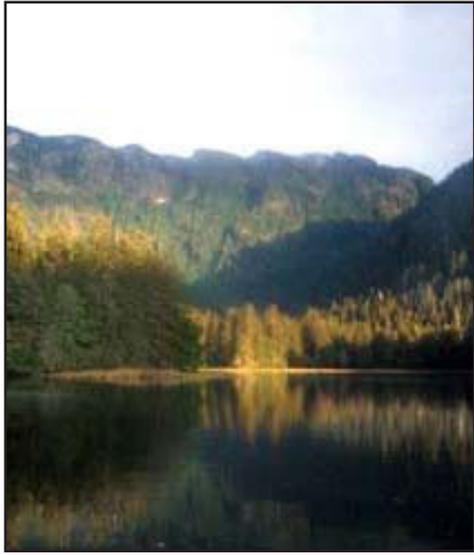


Kuiu Bay Wilderness



Wilderness Character

Bordered on the east by Sumner Strait and on the west by Chatham Strait, Kuiu Wilderness, near the southern end of Kuiu Island, shares a boundary on the north with Tebenkof Bay Wilderness. Chatham Strait is exposed to the open ocean and the water is often not safe for boating. Three major bays indent a coastline of smaller bays, coves, and canals and offer some anchorages. Several small offshore islands are included in this Wilderness of forest and muskeg. Peaks rise to over 2,000 feet. The area receives extensive rainfall. Coho, pink, sockeye and chum salmon along with Dungeness and tanner crabs, halibut, and shrimp thrive in the waters off this island wilderness. Campers are encouraged to use the uplifted gravel beaches as the best durable surfaces to camp upon; just be sure to check a tide book to set a tent up above the high tide for the night. The beaches are also the best place to build a campfire, using small diameter driftwood.

The United States Congress designated 60,581 acres as Kuiu Wilderness in 1990. Located 15 miles from the community of Port Alexander, 10 miles from the communities of Port Baker and Port Protection on Prince of Wales Island, and 60 miles from Petersburg, this Wilderness can be accessed by floatplane, motored, or oared boat. The Tongass National Forest manages this undeveloped, enduring ecosystem for the enjoyment of present and future generations.

Wilderness Management Direction

Management direction for the wilderness comes from the Wilderness Act, the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), and the Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan, as amended, 2008. The Wilderness Act prescribes the general management direction, but ANILCA provides for some specific exceptions. Direction includes:

- The Wilderness Act prohibits commercial uses with the exception of what may be allowed as necessary for visitor services.
- The Wilderness Act prohibits the use of motorized equipment, but ANILCA Section 1316 can allow for the continued use of traditional equipment directly necessary for the taking of fish and game (subject to regulation and compatibility).
- The Wilderness Act prohibits mechanized form of transport (i.e. bicycles, wheelbarrows), but ANILCA Section 811 can allow for the continued use of traditional equipment used for subsistence activities by rural Alaska residents (subject to regulation and compatibility)
- While the Wilderness Act prohibits the use of aircraft, ANILCA Section 1110 allows for the use of airplanes, motorboats, and snow-machines (during periods of adequate snow cover). Helicopters are not specifically identified in the ANILCA exception and their use is prohibited.
- The Tongass Plan identifies **group size limit of no more than 12 persons** for commercial or general public use within this wilderness.

These regulations are established for the wilderness character to remain undeveloped, natural and untrammelled for future use.



Tongass National Forest

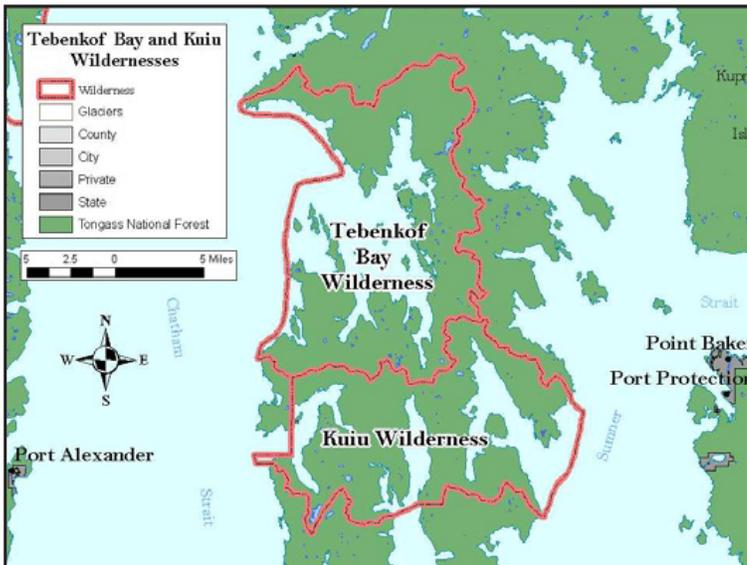


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Wilderness Challenges

People are lured to Alaska for its beauty and excitement, but environmental conditions can be very unforgiving. These two wilderness areas are remote and far from assistance where the average summer temperatures are between 45-65°F. Be prepared with the appropriate clothing, safety equipment, shelter supplies, and water purifying devices for a cool and frequently overcast climate. These areas also contain black bears, so store food and trash properly. During the summer months, be especially careful around salmon spawning streams. When traveling by boat, be aware of the weather conditions coming from Chatham Strait.

Leave No Trace

To insure that this area is left unimpaired for future use, practice the following Leave No Trace principles.

- Plan ahead and prepare for extreme weather conditions, hazards, and emergencies.
- Clean equipment and gear **before** going to the field to avoid the potential spread of invasive plants or seeds.
- Travel and camp on durable surfaces. When possible, disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails.
- Dispose of waste properly. **Pack out** all trash, leftover food, and toilet paper. At appropriate conditions dispose of human waste in the intertidal zone. If camping in upland forests dispose of solid waste by digging a cat hole 6 to 8 inches deep located at least 200 feet from water or campsite.
- Leave what you find. Examine but do not touch the historical structures or artifacts.
- Minimize campfire impacts. Use a lightweight stove when possible. When a campfire is necessary, keep fires small. Build a fire below mean high tide, or when in a forested area, build a mound fire or use a fire pan to avoid damaging the ground vegetation. Stay away from boulders or tree bases to avoid long lasting black scars.
- Respect wildlife and be considerate of other visitors.

Threats and Benefits

While designated wilderness areas have the most protections of any other public lands, there are still threats that degrade the wilderness resource. Heritage resource damage, loss of solitude resulting from an increase of visitors, and resource damage by littering, spread of invasive species and damaged flora are the major human threats to these wilderness areas. Building awareness and a better understanding of designated wilderness areas is the key foundation to ensure that these areas stay wild.

Along with providing recreational opportunities, designated wilderness areas protect natural ecosystems. They provide us with clean air and clean water, and allow the natural processes to continue where humans remain only as visitors. Due to the action of Congress in 1990, Kuiu Wilderness will remain protected for future generations.

Wilderness Facilities

There are no established hiking trails or public recreation facilities in this Wilderness area. There is one primitive portage trail that goes through the wilderness area connecting it with the Tebenkof Bay Wilderness, which shares a boundary to the north. Maps of paddling routes are available at the Petersburg Ranger District.

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