



News Release

TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE-FOREST SERVICE

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Forest Service releases Central Kupreanof FEIS

Petersburg, AK – The U.S. Forest Service has released the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Central Kupreanof timber harvest project. The project area is located on central Kupreanof Island off the Kake road system, within the Petersburg Ranger District on the Tongass National Forest.

The Final EIS is being released without an accompanying Record of Decision (ROD) in light of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary's memorandum dated May 28, 2009, which stated the Secretary reserved decision-making authority over construction and reconstruction of roads and the cutting, sale or removal of timber in Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRA). The intent of the memorandum is to ensure the careful consideration of activities in IRAs while a long term roadless policy is developed.

The FEIS analyzes three action alternatives for harvesting timber, including an alternative that does not propose harvest or road building in IRAs, and one no-action alternative. Under the alternatives that involved IRAs, less than 0.1 percent to 1.5 percent of the combined roadless area would be affected.

Timber harvest under the action alternatives ranges from 28.2 to 70.2 million board feet (mmbf). Alternative 3 has been identified as the Preferred Alternative. It proposes harvest of 70.2 mmbf, 25 miles of new road construction, 9 miles of reconstruction and 6 miles of temporary road.

A Notice of Availability will be published in the Federal Register for the Central Kupreanof Timber Harvest FEIS, initiating the 30-day notice period. Upon approval of the Secretary, a ROD will be published documenting the selection of an alternative and the facts considered in reaching that decision. The effective date of implementation for the decision and the Notice of Rights of Appeal will also be specified in the ROD.

Copies of the FEIS and ROD will be available on the Tongass National Forest website, at www.fs.fed.us/r10/tongass/projects/projects.shtml, or at the Petersburg Ranger District office, 907-772-3871.