



# Tongass National Forest

## *News Release*

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## **Forest Service Ready to Start Work on Community Stewardship Project**

**Petersburg, AK**— The Tongass National Forest announced today it is ready to move forward with a stewardship project on Kupreanof Island. The project calls for fish passage improvement, wildlife habitat restoration, recreational enhancement, road and trail maintenance and timber harvesting. The project is a critical piece of the agency's "Transition Framework" effort announced last May, by Regional Forester Beth Pendleton.

"The Central Kupreanof Stewardship Project is the first phase of a longer term project with many facets," said Petersburg District Ranger Chris Savage. "Ultimately, we're looking to maintain and improve current jobs and infrastructure within the community of Kake, while building capacity for future industries in Southeast. We're excited to have completed the analysis and to move ahead with implementation."

The Tongass is now in a position to take such steps as a result of today's release of the Central Kupreanof Timber Harvest decision, which includes a total of 26.3 MMBF identified as available for harvest. The stewardship project will likely include a timber component as well as possible fish passage improvements, wildlife habitat restoration and road and trail maintenance. Savage has been working with the community and regional stakeholders for over a year, collaboratively exploring how to garner the most benefit for the forest management, local residents and contractors.

"We're working with our communities and our local employers to find projects, which make sense and keeps Southeast Alaskans employed," said Savage. "In today's economic climate, it's more important than ever."

The Central Kupreanof Timber Harvest decision and associated environmental analysis, called the Central Kupreanof Timber Harvest Environmental Impact Statement, will be available on the website starting today ([www.fs.fed.us/r10/tongass/projects/projects.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/tongass/projects/projects.shtml)) and mailed out early next week. As part of the Forest Service process for releasing such decisions, a 30-day public appeal period will begin March 14, 2011. For further information contact District Ranger Chris Savage, at 907-772-5900.

**NOTE TO RADIO:** The Forest Service has developed a newswire and actuality packages for this release. To download, visit [www.fs.usda.gov/goto/r10/newlines](http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/r10/newlines). For technical assistance, contact Gary Chase at 907-586-7150.

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