

NEWS RELEASE

TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE--FOREST SERVICE

Contact: Sue Jennings (sjennings@fs.fed.us)
Phone: (907) 772-5864
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Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District Outfitter and Guide Management Plan *Draft Environmental Impact Statement*

KETCHIKAN, Alaska – Tongass National Forest has completed a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan. The Plan looks at the number of days to allocate to outfitters and guides on the National Forest System Lands within the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District, based on visitor capacity. Visitor capacity is the estimated number of users, both guided and unguided, who can be in an area without a loss in the quality of the recreation experience. The Plan does not limit unguided visitors. Unguided visitors can continue to enjoy the district recreation and subsistence opportunities in the same way they do now.

The three action alternatives would distribute between 34,900 and 74,000 service days annually to outfitters and guides for recreational use. The no-action alternative would allow about 24,200 service days to outfitters and guides based on the highest use by area between 2005 and 2009. The DEIS is available on the internet at http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/tongass/projects/nepa_project.shtml?project=32817.

The Responsible Official for this action is:

Jeffrey DeFrest
District Ranger
Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District
Tongass National Forest

For additional information regarding this action, contact Sue Jennings, Tongass Supervisor's Office:

P.O. Box 309
Petersburg, AK 99833
PHONE (907) 772-5864
FAX (907) 772-5895

Written, oral, and electronic comment on the DEIS will be accepted for 45 calendar days following the date of publication of the notice of availability (NOA) in the Federal Register. The NOA should be published in the Federal Register on July 8, 2011.

Subsistence hearings are planned for Metlakatla and Ketchikan in July.