

Use Area 04-16D

Port Althorp – Hoonah Ranger District

Recreation Carrying Capacity (Groups At One Time): 6

Description

This use area was created to isolate the area around the community of Elfin Cove, Port Althorp, and the Lemesurier and Indian Islands Wilderness. It also includes the relatively small George Islands. It has a high recreational value for both commercial and non-commercial operations with increasing potential for recreation opportunities.

LUD: LUD II, Semi-Remote Recreation, Wilderness.

ROS: Rural, Roaded Natural, Semi-Primitive Motorized, Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized.

National Forest Shoreline Miles: 90

National Forest Shoreline Acres: 15,852

Communities

This use area includes the community of Elfin Cove. This tiny fishing village has a fluctuating population of approximately 125 people during the summer season, composed primarily of seasonal private lodges that provide ocean sport fishing charters, stream fishing, and sight seeing tours. The population decreases during winter to about 25 year round residents. This isolated village is accessible by floatplane or boat only and has no ferry service.

Alaska Coastal Management Act

Forest Service Facilities

Trails George Islands WWII Canon trail

Non-National Forest Lands

This use area includes the community of Elfin Cove, one private inholding at Margret Creek in Port Althorp, and 3 private inholdings on Lemesurier Island.

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Recreation Use

Area Attractions

Very scenic setting, Icy Strait, Elfin Cove, marine and terrestrial mammal viewing opportunities, sea bird watching, safe anchorage in Port Althorp.

Commercial Use

Freshwater fishing, camping, sightseeing.

Non-commercial Use

Oyster farm in Port Althorp, fishing, hunting.

Use Patterns

This area is a travel corridor between the communities of Pelican, Elfin Cove, Gustavus, and Hoonah for commercial fishermen, recreationists, and local residents. Mid-size cruise ships frequent the George Islands.

Primary Use Areas

Granite Cove and port Althorp.

Areas of Concern

Resource damage (erosion) is occurring at the George Island WWII Canon. Site hardening is necessary if designated as a concentrated recreation site. Over crowding in Port Althorp.

Management/Resource Considerations

Subsistence

Local subsistence.

Wildlife

NMFS identified one Steller sea lion haul-out in this use area. Although not mapped it is assumed that bald eagle nests are located along the shoreline in numbers at least equal to surveyed areas to the east of this use area. The Port Althorp state and federal closed area lies (closed to taking brown bears) lies entirely within this use area.

Fisheries

Two streams were identified with high freshwater fishing values.

Botany

5 surveys covering 1 mile of shoreline revealed *Botrychium lunaria*, *B. virginianum*, and *B. minganense* have been found within beach meadows.

Cultural/Heritage

1 historic and 1 prehistoric site was identified during 8 surveys that covered 8 miles.