



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service

Tongass
National Forest
R10-MB-632a

Navy Timber Sale

Record of Decision

**Wrangell Ranger District
Wrangell, Alaska**

March 2009



Key Acronyms and Other Terms

ANILCA	Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act
AHMU	Aquatic Habitat Management Unit
ASQ	Allowable Sale Quantity
BMP	Best Management Practice
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFR	Code of Federal Regulation
DBH	Diameter at Breast Height
DEIS	Draft Environmental Impact Statement
EFH	Essential Fish Habitat
EVC	Existing Visual Condition
FACTS	Forest Service Activity Tracking System
FEIS	Final Environmental Impact Statement
Forest Plan	Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan, 2008
FSM or FSH	Forest Service Manual or Forest Service Handbook
GIS	Geographic Information System
GMU	Game Management Unit
HSI	Habitat Suitability Index
HUC	Hydrologic Unit Code
IDT	Interdisciplinary Team
LTF	Log Transfer Facility
LUD	Land Use Designation
LWD	Large Woody Debris
MAF	Marine Access Facility
MBF	Thousand Board Feet
MIS	Management Indicator Species
MMBF	Million Board Feet
NEAT_R	NEPA Economic Analysis Tool Residual Value
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
NFMA	National Forest Management Act
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
OGR	Old-growth Reserve
POG	Productive old-growth (forest)
RAW	Reasonable Assurance of Windfirmness
RCS	Road Condition Survey
RMA	Riparian Management Area
RMO	Road Management Objective
ROS	Recreation Opportunity Spectrum
SRA	Sediment Risk Assessment
TES	Threatened, Endangered, Sensitive [species]
TPIT	Tongass Plan Implementation Team
TTRA	Tongass Timber Reform Act
VAC	Visual Absorption Capability
VCU	Value Comparison Unit
VQO	Visual Quality Objective
WAA	Wildlife Analysis Area
WCA	Wrangell Cooperative Association

Cover photo: view of Navy Peak and Cannery Point

Record of Decision

Navy Timber Sale

USDA Forest Service
Wrangell Ranger District
Tongass National Forest
Alaska Region

Summary

The Navy Timber Sale Record of Decision (ROD) describes my decision on the Selected Alternative, which incorporates all of Alternative D and selected units and roads from Alternatives C and E, for implementation in the Navy project area.

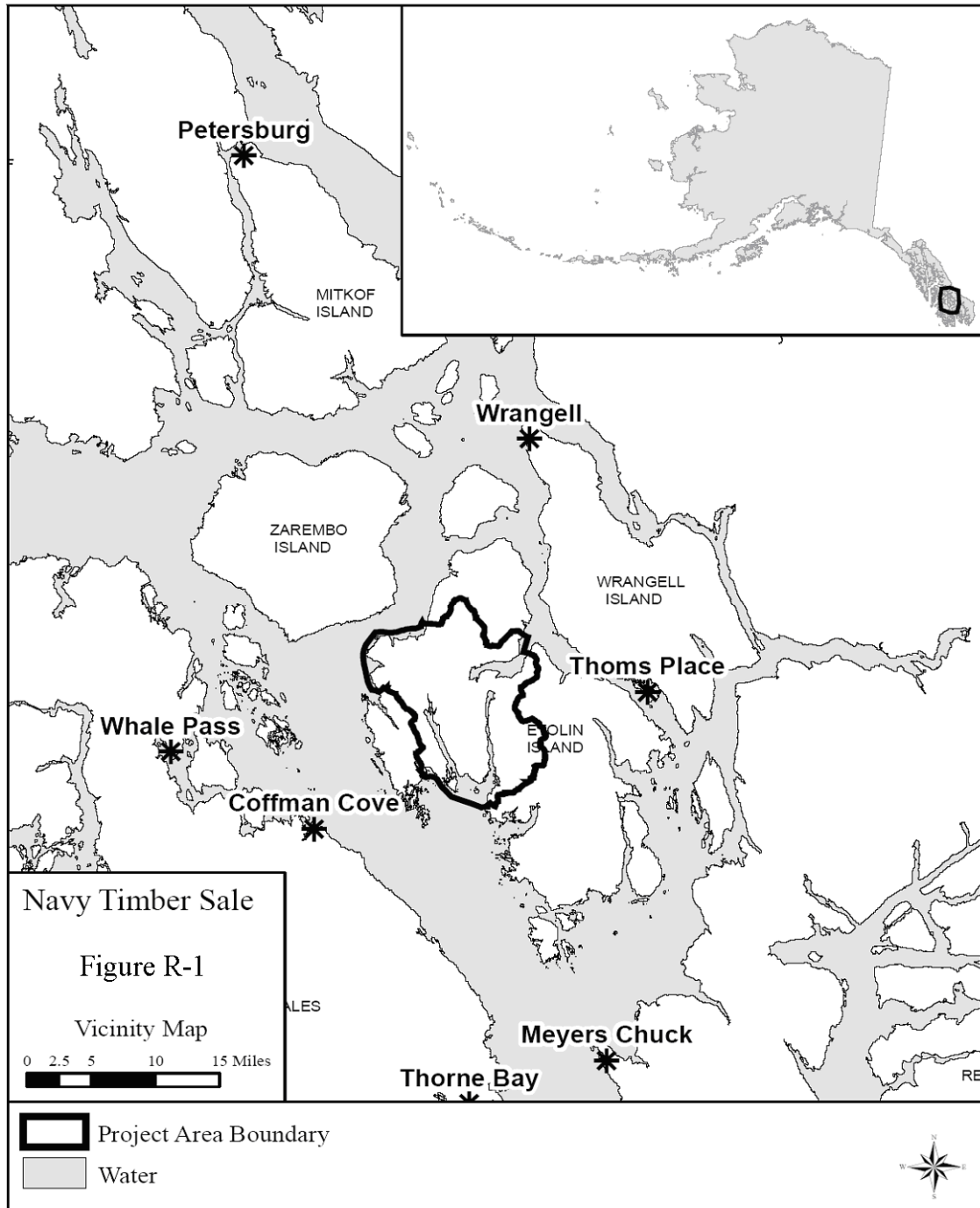
The Selected Alternative will harvest timber from 5,435 acres of commercial forest land to contribute approximately 72.8 million board feet (MMBF) of sawlog and utility timber volume to the Tongass National Forest timber sale program. The timber will be harvested by ground-based logging systems or by helicopter. The even-aged management (clearcut) and uneven-aged management (partial harvest) will be used. The Selected Alternative includes construction of 8.1 miles of National Forest System (NFS) road and associated access management objectives and 8.8 miles of temporary road. Design features of timber harvest units in this decision are described in detail on the unit cards in Appendix 1 of this ROD.

Project Location

The Navy Timber Sale project area (77,500 acres) is located in the central part of Etolin Island approximately 22 air miles south of Wrangell, Alaska. Previous timber harvest has taken place in the area and there are two existing log transfer facilities (LTFs) with associated roads. The Anita Bay road system, approximately 50 miles of National Forest System roads, is not connected to any community. There are no other land ownerships within the project area boundary.

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Figure R-1
Navy Timber Sale Vicinity Map



Source: GIS, Wrangell Ranger District

Decision

My decision includes timber harvest and the associated roads from Alternative D and the units and roads (listed below) from Alternatives C and E as the Selected Alternative for implementation in the Navy project area.

Considerations made in the selection for this decision include:

- responding to the Tongass Adaptive Management Strategy and incorporating direction in the 2008 decision of the Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan);
- maximizing the amount of ground-based logging while minimizing the effects on resources; and
- including enough volume that would be harvested by helicopter and focusing on timber value through single-tree selection to attempt to offset the costs of the staging and use of helicopter for logging.

Description of the Selected Alternative

The Selected Alternative will harvest timber on 5,345 acres of commercial forest land to contribute approximately 72.8 million board feet (MMBF) of sawlog and utility volume to the Tongass National Forest timber sale program. Timber harvest will be either even-aged management (clearcuts or clearcuts with reserves) or uneven-aged management (single-tree selection). Design features of timber harvest units in this decision are described in detail on the unit cards in Appendix 1 of the ROD.

The Selected Alternative includes construction of 8.1 miles of National Forest System (NFS) road and 8.8 miles of temporary road. All new NFS roads will be placed in storage after timber sale activities are completed. Temporary roads will be decommissioned and allowed to revegetate after harvest. Design features of the NFS roads for this decision are described in detail on the road cards in Appendix 2 of this ROD. Temporary roads are included on the unit cards, Appendix 1. The Anita Bay LTFs will be used to transport the timber using barging and/or rafting. About 19.5 MMBF from 2,000 acres will be transferred by helicopter from the harvest units directly to saltwater locations near the units.

The Selected Alternative includes all units and roads from Alternative D. The following modifications were made to the units shown in the Final EIS:

- Unit 44 - two settings were added, using the configuration from Alternative C
- Unit 48 - added the eastern setting, using the configuration from Alternative C
- Unit 57 - added the western setting, using the configuration from Alternative C
- Unit 58 - changed prescription from clearcut to clearcut with 15 percent reserves
- Unit 72 - dropped the western setting and changed the prescription to clearcut
- Unit 107 - added a temporary road to the eastern setting

The following units and roads from Alternative C were included:

- Units 34, 35, 36, 39, 40, 53, 55, 56, 82, 83 (northern four settings only), 93, 102, 119, 123, 128, 129, 136, 137, 138, 139
- Units 130 and 131 and existing Road 51543 with temporary road extension

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- Units 109, 110 and 111; extended Road 51009; and relocated temporary road to Unit 111
- Unit 97 and extended Road 6540
- Unit 91 and 92 and temporary road
- Unit 90 and reconstruct Road 6543
- Units 51 and 89 changed logging system to helicopter and the prescription to single-tree selection
- Units 80, 81, and 82 and reconstruct Road 6544 and Road 51442
- Unit 107 and the addition of a temporary road to eastern setting

In addition, the following units and roads from Alternative E were added:

- Units 44, 62, 112 and 113

Rationale for the Decision

In making my decision, I considered the objectives to meet the Purpose and Need for this project as well as the issues and concerns raised during scoping, and comments on the Draft EIS, both in support and opposing this project. I considered Forest Plan direction relevant to this project and the competing interests and values of the public. I considered all viewpoints and incorporated them where feasible and consistent with the Purpose and Need of the project.

I evaluated the trade-off between resource protection and social values. The Selected Alternative provides a beneficial mix of resources for the public, within a framework of existing laws, regulations, policies, public needs and desires, and the capabilities of the land, while meeting the stated Purpose and Need for this project. My decision to implement the Selected Alternative conforms to the Forest Plan and National Forest Management Act (NFMA).

I considered the need to manage this timber resource on the Tongass in order to produce an even-flow of sawtimber and other wood products. Appendix A in the FEIS describes the process that maintains a steady supply of timber and how each project goes through a series of steps before timber can be offered from the National Forest. I considered the concerns for providing economical timber sale offerings and the need to meet annual demand for timber. By including additional units and roads analyzed in Alternatives C and E with Alternative D, I have increased the harvest volume that could be possibly harvested in the future depending on the markets. This decision provides about 72 MMBF toward meeting the timber industry needs in Southeast Alaska timber industry. This volume includes both sawtimber volume and utility volume. Although there are few markets within Southeast Alaska for utility volume at this time, this component may meet future needs, especially if the need for alternate fuels increases.

I realize that the financial efficiency of this particular project has decreased substantially since the project was proposed and that there continues to be a current downward trend in the timber markets. The Selected Alternative as a whole appraises deficit and not all of the timber is economical to offer, at this time. I also needed to consider the fluctuation of timber markets, the length of time that it takes to do field

review and analyses on a project of this size, the timber volume available and the relative effects of each alternative. The first sale of 18 mmbf of timber is planned to be offered in FY 09. Subsequent sales will be added to the five-year timber sale plan, as described in Appendix A of the Navy Final EIS.

Potential annualized jobs that could be supported are estimated between 253 and 359. The range of these jobs accounts for possible differences if the purchaser elects to ship material to the lower 48 states under the limited interstate shipping policy or export policies. The higher end of this range accounts for all material processed locally including Alaska yellow-cedar and western redcedar. The purchasers may elect to process all the sawlogs, including Alaska yellow-cedar and western redcedar locally, which is the upper range of these jobs. Shipping up to 50 percent of the total sawlog volume of all species and 100 percent of the utility volume to markets, may reduce support for local sawmilling jobs and represents the low end of the range. For this project, this could be primarily interstate shipment to the lower 48 of unprocessed Sitka spruce and western hemlock sawlogs that are a) smaller than 15 inches in diameter at the small end of a 40-foot log, or b) grade 3 or grade 4 logs of any diameter. Currently, western redcedar identified as surplus to Alaska's domestic needs and all Alaska yellow-cedar may be exported to domestic and foreign markets at the purchaser's options.

I considered the potential for increased fragmentation within a naturally fragmented area, the reduction of productive old growth, and the effects on wildlife. The Forest Plan Conservation Strategy with its system of reserves and matrix of old-growth forest is designed to provide population viability across the Tongass in accordance with NFMA. In addition, the single-tree selection prescription, which retains 70 percent of the basal area of the trees within a unit, will retain old-growth characteristics on 3,700 of the harvested acres. The road that was proposed in the Navy Draft EIS within the beach buffer to access Units 53 and 55 has been relocated and the beach buffer will retain its integrity as wildlife habitat.

Although the 2008 decision on the Forest Plan included the allocation for the Old-growth reserves in the Navy project area, I considered all of the comments about Old-growth reserves on the Draft EIS that were received prior to that 2008 decision.

- I considered the relocation of the small OGR within the Anita Bay pinch point with an allocation of a small OGR. This area contains a high amount of natural non-forest and scrub forest lands, and very little high-volume old-growth that is not already protected by standards and guidelines and a goshawk nest buffer. The main access roads for the Anita Bay road system pass through the pinch point and cannot be closed and there is extensive past harvest, making this area less desirable for a small Old-growth Reserve. An unharvested area to the north of Anita Bay, which meets the small Old-growth Reserve criteria for amount of old growth and has no roads, was selected with the 2008 Forest Plan decision. The natural lack of productive old growth in the pinch point causes marginal connectivity for old-growth associated species. The best connection through the pinch point is along the beach around the head of Burnett Inlet. It has been modified by past partial harvest but is now protected by the Forest Plan beach fringe standard and guidelines. I also decided to drop the western setting of Unit 72 along the stream to facilitate wildlife passage.
- Based on the comments on the Navy Draft EIS and subsequent conversations with ADF&G, I considered a modification of the Steamer medium Old-growth

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Reserve (OGR) in VCU 4660. Modification of this OGR would necessitate re-evaluating all the adjacent small OGRs, a process recently completed with the Forest Plan. I decided that the construction of the Mosman Inlet LTF and associated road system is not warranted at this time and units are not proposed with this decision in the area to the west of Mosman Inlet. This allows for future discussions on the design of Steamer OGR.

I considered the need for elevational corridors for deer and other species for seasonal travel patterns. The silvicultural prescriptions for Units 107, 112, and 113 will maintain this function in the Kindergarten Bay-Quiet Harbor area.

The effects to the goshawk nest found in late summer of 2008 have been considered. Unit 84 and the southern settings of Unit 83 are not included in the Selected Alternative.

This project avoids the higher-value roadless areas. Only roads that are logical extensions of the existing road system and allocated to development LUDs were used to access harvest units. This project is consistent with the Tongass Adaptive Management Strategy in regards to the roadless areas. Only activities on lands designated as Phase 1 by the decision on the Tongass Forest Plan are part of the Selected Alternative. Units and roads within the Navy watershed were not considered for the Selected Alternative, since that area is part of those lands considered for Phase 2. In addition, the harvest units near Cooney Cove and the associated roads and Mosman Inlet LTF are not included in the Selected Alternative and, therefore, a new road system will not enter the Mosman Inventoried Roadless Area.

I considered the cumulative watershed effects of this project combined with past harvest. The project design and implementation guidelines will limit the cumulative resource effects of this project combined with past harvest.

Areas adjacent to streams with high windthrow concerns have been identified on the unit cards. Reasonably, assurance of windfirmness (RAW) zones will be designed to protect the forested riparian management areas where additional protection for windfirmness is needed.

To minimize the potential effects of sediment to streams, I have not included the roads to Units 44 and 51 in the Selected Alternative, these units will be accessed by helicopter. The feasibility of the temporary road that extends north from the terminus of Road 51543 to access Units 130 and 131 will be reviewed at time of implementation to assess the possible effects on Fishtrap Creek.

While the Selected Alternative would result in some changes to the Navy project area, such as closed roads and more harvested stands, the effects would not noticeably decrease or change the recreational opportunities for established recreation activities. The Selected Alternative would not restrict recreation users' ability to pursue new recreation opportunities.

The effects on scenery when viewed from the Visual Priority Routes and Use Areas (Forest Plan, Appendix F) were evaluated. The silvicultural prescriptions, which leave more than 50 percent of the trees, and unit design for units (83, 107, 112, and 113) near Kindergarten Bay and Quiet Harbor, have been incorporated into the Selected Alternative to meet the Scenery Integrity Objectives. The single-tree selection harvest proposed for the helicopter harvest units along Burnett and Mosman Inlets will minimize the effects to scenery from those waterways.

Areas with slopes greater than 72 percent either have been avoided or will have a slope stability analysis completed prior to implementation. If the slope is found to be unstable, retention of trees is planned as stated on the unit cards, such as for Unit 58.

Forest health will improve by removing dwarf mistletoe-infected trees and by creating younger, more-vigorous growing forest. Timber lost to windthrow will be minimized with the use of even-aged management and windfirm buffers, or by single-tree selection, which retains enough canopy to be wind resistant. Measures, including the retention of cedar seed-trees and cedar interplanting, are included as part of the silvicultural prescriptions for fourteen units (Units 37, 43, 45, 46, 47, 60, 61, 66, 80, 106, 109, 110, 111, and 130) to ensure establishment of a cedar component in regenerated stands. Establishment of cedar regeneration reduces the potential for future porcupine damage in young-growth stands since these species are not preferred for food by porcupines, especially where the percent of the cedar component is low or lacking in existing stands. Long-term productivity, growth, and yield would be enhanced through the development of young, vigorously growing stands.

The revision of the Alaska Region sensitive species list occurred in February 2009. The effects to those species recently listed as sensitive were analyzed and this information was added to the Navy Final EIS. The plants species that were added to the Regional sensitive list had been previously analyzed as rare plants for the Navy Draft EIS. Two wildlife species, the black oystercatcher and the Aleutian tern, were added to the revised sensitive species list. These species are unlikely to be affected by the activities from the Selected Alternative.

I considered the comments received about climate change on the 2008 Forest Plan Draft EIS and reviewed the analysis in the 2008 Forest Plan Final EIS. That forest-wide analysis discusses the risk of possible effects and the considerable uncertainty concerning specific predictions of how the climate may change, and even more uncertainty regarding the effects of climate change on the resources of the Tongass National Forest. The Tongass National Forest will continue to monitor potential effects of climate change through the existing Forest Plan monitoring programs and other studies that are happening regionally and nationally. Any needs for a different course of action that might affect this decision will be addressed through existing procedures.

Effects of the Selected Alternative on Key Issues

Two issues were resolved between the Navy Draft EIS and the Final EIS. As previously mentioned, the 2008 decision on the Forest Plan included the placement of the small Old-growth Reserves in the Navy project area (Issue 2 in the Navy Draft EIS), and the Tongass Adaptive Management Strategy, which does not allow timber harvest in the Navy watershed (Issue 5 in the Navy Draft EIS) at this time.

Results of the Selected Alternative analyses are listed below.

Issue 1: Timber Supply and Economics

Concerns were expressed from the public regarding the validity of this sale due to a perceived lack of demand, questionable economic viability, the amount of economically viable timber offered by the Forest Service, and the need to provide jobs and support for the local economy.

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The financial efficiency analysis of the Selected Alternative resulted in:

- Harvest volume – about 63.0 MMBF sawlog and 9.8 MMBF of utility
- Indicated bid rate value - (\$138.00)/MBF
- Projected employment figures (total) – ranges from 253 to 359 annualized job years, depending on application of interstate shipping.

There is less timber volume from the Selected Alternative than Alternative C (87.5 MMBF) and more volume than Alternatives B, D, E and F. Alternative F would provide 18.3 MMBF. The financial efficiency of all of the alternatives is currently deficit when evaluated as a whole; Alternative F is the least negative at (\$88.47) and Alternative C is the most negative at (\$163.00). The number of jobs potentially supported by the Selected Alternative would be less than Alternative C but more than the other action alternatives. Therefore, the Selected Alternative is within the range of the alternatives analyzed in the Final EIS. Alternative F was not selected although it has the least negative indicated bid value since it also has the least amount of volume.

Issue 2: Wildlife Habitat Fragmentation

Concerns were expressed about the effects of fragmentation on wildlife habitat and wildlife populations by removing old-growth habitat and/or connectivity.

The Selected Alternative will reduce productive old growth from 60,750 acres to 58,566 acres, causing further fragmentation to an area already fragmented from natural and human causes. Some old-growth corridors would lose connectivity, which may affect travel patterns for old-growth associated wildlife. The western setting of Unit 72 was modified to provide a travel corridor along the stream. Elevational corridors for deer and marten would be provided in Units 107, 112, and 113.

The Selected Alternative affects about 890 less acres of productive old-growth habitat than Alternative C, although, more than Alternatives B, D, E, and F. Alternative F would have the least effect of all action alternatives and would affect 844 acres. Therefore, the Selected Alternative is within the range of the alternatives analyzed in the Final EIS.

Alternative E has the least effect on the old-growth corridors and provides the retention of most of the habitat within the Anita Bay pinch point and Alternative C would have the most effect. This alternative was selected since the decision on the 2008 Forest Plan allocated an undeveloped area with no previous harvest or existing roads north of Anita Bay as the small Old-growth Reserve.

Issue 3: Inventoried Roadless Areas

Concerns were expressed that timber harvest and road construction in inventoried roadless areas could affect the characteristics of the area.

The proposed activities within the roadless areas are consistent with the direction in the 2008 decision of the Forest Plan. The proposed timber harvest and road building in all action alternatives will increase the developed acres by further extensions into the roadless areas, but overall large portions will remain intact. At most 4 percent of the total roadless areas in the Navy project area will be affected by the Selected Alternative and 2 percent of the total roadless acres on Etolin Island. There are no unique characteristics within the roadless areas that will be affected by this project.

The Selected Alternative uses cable harvest on about 720 acres within the roadless areas, more than Alternative E, but less than half of the cable harvest acres in

Alternative C with 1,650 cable acres. The Selected Alternative uses helicopter harvest on almost 3,100 acres - about 100 acres more than Alternative C. The total harvest in roadless areas is over 800 acres less in the Selected Alternative, than in Alternative C. Because the units harvested by helicopter are single-tree selection with 70 percent of the trees reserved and no roads associated with these units, the overall effects to the roadless character will be less in the Selected Alternative than in Alternative C. The effects of the Selected Alternative are therefore within the range of effects considered in the Navy Final EIS.

Alternative F has the least effect on the inventoried roadless areas but was not selected since the decision on the 2008 Forest Plan allocated parts of the roadless areas to Land Use Designations where timber harvest and road construction is allowed.

Other Environmental Consequences

All resources were evaluated for the effects of the Selected Alternative; none of the effects for any resource was outside the range of the alternatives analyzed in detail for the EIS. Analyses of the effects on other resources for the Selected Alternative, including the cumulative effects with other projects, are located in the project record.

Alternatives Considered

Six alternatives were considered in detail in the Draft EIS released for public comment. When preparing the Final EIS, these alternatives were modified to include aspects of the 2008 Forest Plan. The analysis was consistent with the transition language of the 2008 Forest Plan and these changes are described in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS.

Due to the reallocation of the small Old-growth Reserves, the replacement of the Marten Standard and Guideline (1997 Forest Plan, WILD112, XVIA2) for retention of stand structure with the Legacy Standard and Guideline (Forest Plan, WILD1, IV), and other changes in the Forest Plan decision, the action alternatives changed between the Navy Draft EIS and Final EIS. However, all the action alternatives are within the range of effects of the alternatives proposed in the Draft EIS. See Chapter 2, Table 2-2 of both Draft EIS and Final EIS. See Table R-1 for a comparison of the Final EIS alternatives with the Selected Alternative.

All alternatives, with the exception of Alternative A, respond to the Purpose and Need. All action alternatives respond to the issues identified in varying degrees as displayed in Table R-1 and discussed in the Navy FEIS.

The Final EIS analyzed the following alternatives in detail:

Alternative A - No Action, proposed no new timber harvest or road construction in the project area. It does not preclude timber harvest from other areas or from the project area in the future. Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations require that a “No Action” alternative be analyzed in every EIS (40 CFR 1502.14(d)). This alternative represents the existing condition. It serves as a baseline for comparing the action alternatives and responds to the issues of protection of inventoried roadless areas and protection of wildlife habitat.

Alternative B was the proposed action. Due to the reallocation of the small Old-growth Reserves in the Forest Plan decision, the proposed action changed between the Navy

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Draft EIS and Final EIS, and the outputs and effects of the proposed action decreased. This alternative proposed to harvest 3,212 acres producing 45.5 MMBF of timber.

Alternative C proposed to harvest 6,107 acres producing 87.5 MMBF of timber. This alternative emphasized Issue 1 by maximizing the amount of timber harvested.

Alternative D, the preferred alternative for the Draft EIS, proposed to harvest 2,369 acres producing 37.2 MMBF of timber. This alternative emphasized Issue 1 but focused on trying to select the more economical units, with greater use of conventional yarding methods than Alternative B. However, this did not result in an overall economic alternative.

Alternative E proposed to harvest 3,326 acres producing 38.4 MMBF of timber. This alternative emphasized Issue 2, Wildlife Fragmentation, by avoiding harvest in the Anita Bay pinch point and reducing the size of created openings, using uneven-aged management on more of the units, and reducing the amount of road construction.

Alternative F proposed to harvest 1,251 acres producing 18.3 MMBF of timber. This alternative emphasized to Issue 3, Roadless Areas, by avoiding all timber harvest and roads within the inventoried roadless areas.

Several additional alternatives were proposed internally or by the public either during scoping or during the comment period on the Navy Draft EIS. A discussion of these alternatives is located in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS, Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Detailed Study.

Environmentally Preferred Alternative

Alternative A, the No-action Alternative, would result in no environmental disturbance and is therefore the environmentally preferred alternative. Of the action alternatives, Alternative F is the environmentally preferred alternative for the project area, although Alternative E has less effect on the Anita Bay pinch point area.

Table R-1
Comparison of Alternative Design and Issues by Alternative, Including the Selected Alternative

Category	Alt. A	Selected Alt.	Alt. B	Alt. C	Alt. D	Alt. E	Alt. F
Harvest acreage and volume¹:							
Total acres of harvest	0	5,435	3,212	6,107	2,369	3,326	1,251
Acres of cable/shovel yarding	0	1,738	1,273	2,505	1,247	554	626
Acres of helicopter yarding	0	3,697	1,939	3,602	1,122	2,772	625
Total net volume (sawlog and utility, MMBF)		72.8	45.5	87.5	37.2	38.4	18.3
Cable/shovel yarding (sawlog only, MMBF)	0	32.6	24.4	47	23.7	10.3	10.9
Helicopter yarding (sawlog only, MMBF)	0	33.6	14.9	28.8	8.3	22.8	4.9
Acres harvested by silvicultural system²:							
Even-aged management	0	1,654	1,207	2,185	1,180	487	559
Two-aged management	0	0	0	268	0	0	0
Uneven-aged management	0	3,781	2,005	3,654	1,189	2,839	692
Roads and log transfer facilities (LTFs):							
Miles of NFS road	0	8.1	6.6	12.0	4.8	2.2	0.5
Miles of temporary road	0	8.8	6.3	15.7	5.4	2.3	4.0
Miles of proposed road reconstruction	0	3.5	0.9	3.2	0.4	2.2	2.2
Proposes construction of Mosman Inlet LTF?	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
Issue 1: Timber supply and economics							
Total net volume (sawlog and utility) MMBF ^{1,2}	0	72.8	45.5	87.5	37.2	38.4	18.3
Indicated bid value (\$/MBF) ³	0	(\$138.00)	(\$142.00)	(\$163.00)	(\$143.06)	(\$160.31)	(\$88.47)
Direct employment (job equivalent) ⁴	0	253-359	158-224	303-429	127-180	131-187	63-89
Road and LTF costs (const/reconst)/MBF ⁵ costs	0	\$61	\$72	\$90	\$85	\$56	\$33
Logging costs (stump to mill costs) (\$/MBF)	0	\$453	\$459	\$483	\$451	\$479	\$400
Issue 2: Wildlife habitat fragmentation							
Acres of POG habitat in WAA 1901 post harvest	60,750	58,566	59,169	57,689	59,263	59,889	59,906
Acres of interior POG habitat in WAA 1901 post harvest	24,642	22,725	23,051	22,013	23,280	23,702	24,044
Acres of coarse canopy (SD67) old growth in WAA 1901 post harvest	3,654	3,279	3,286	3,255	3,341	3,421	3,583
Issue 3: Inventoried roadless areas (IRA)							
Acres of IRA affected by timber harvest and road construction ^{6,7}	0	3,348	2,416	5,383	2,181	953	273
Miles of road proposed in IRAs ⁷	0	6.7	7.0	17.0	5.0	1.9	0

¹ MMBF = million board feet; this volume includes sawlog and utility.

² Even-aged RX = Clearcut, Clearcut w/ 15% reserves, Clearcut w/ 50% reserves; Uneven-aged RX = Single-tree Selection; and Two-aged is Clearcut w/ 15% reserves

³ () indicate a negative value. Thousand board feet (MBF).

⁴ Job equivalents are based on a range from 50 percent of net volume shipped to markets outside Alaska, to all sawlogs processed locally. Based on sawlog volume

⁶ Acres affected by alternative includes the zone of influence defined as 1,200 feet from existing and proposed roads, and the cable/shovel harvest units plus 600 feet from those units, but does not include helicopter units since these are single-tree selection with no associated roads.

⁷ Includes NFS and temporary road.

Source: GIS; NEAT_R v. 2.15, 3rd Qtr. 2007 - Numbers may not exactly match totals and unit cards due to rounding.

2008 Forest Plan

The 2008 Forest Plan was completed with the signing of the Record of Decision (ROD) on January 23, 2008, while the Navy project was being planned. The ROD for the 2008 Forest Plan adopts the Timber Sale Program Adaptive Management Strategy, under which portions of the suitable land base become available for project-level planning in three phases. The Navy project area is within the Phase 1 portion of the suitable land base with the exception of the Navy watershed, which is in Phase 2. Only the planning for the activities within the Phase 1 portion of the Navy project area is allowed to continue for this project and implementation once the planning process is completed. All activities in the Navy watershed were deleted from the alternatives between the Navy Draft EIS and Final EIS.

The 2008 Forest Plan ROD also contains transition language for timber sale projects, like Navy (Category 2), that were already being planned. For Category 2 projects, the ROD for the 2008 Forest Plan directs me “...to review these projects, and incorporate the new direction in the amended Forest Plan to the extent this can be done without causing major disruptions in the implementation of these projects”.

Navy is one of the 36 projects in Category 2 that the Responsible Official reviewed and determined “...are consistent with the goals and objectives of the amended Plan” (p. 69). The environmental effects of the Navy project have been disclosed to the public through site-specific project-level environmental documents. Navy and the other projects in Category 2 were also assumed to be implemented in the environmental analysis of Alternatives 5 and 6 in the 2008 Forest Plan Final EIS. “Because the Final EIS considered these projects in its effects analysis, their implementation is not in conflict with the amended Plan.” (p.70)

The ROD for the 2008 Forest Plan highlights the Legacy Standard and Guideline for goshawk foraging and marten habitat, and the new direction regarding probable goshawk nests as changes to be considered. I directed the Navy IDT to incorporate the Legacy Standard and Guideline changes for the Navy ROD. The Legacy Standard and Guideline does not apply to VCU in the project area because they contain enough old-growth forest to provide habitat for old-growth associated species (including marten). Therefore, trees will not be retained for marten habitat in high volume strata.

Standards and guidelines were applied to confirmed (known and documented) goshawk nests. There are no “probable nests” (stands where goshawks have been observed but a confirmed nest has not been documented) in the project area and, therefore, this new direction does not apply to the Navy project area. The direction for new confirmed nests has been applied to the nest near Unit 83.

Another change in the Forest Plan was to use total road density instead of open road density where human-caused wolf mortality has been determined to be the significant contributing factor to unsustainable wolf mortality. Although there has been no determination that this is the case in the Navy project area, based on wolf harvest data for Wildlife Analysis Area (WAA) 1901 and in consultation with ADF&G, total road density was calculated and disclosed in the Navy Timber Sale Final EIS, Chapter 3, Wildlife.

The ROD for the 2008 Forest Plan also states that Category 2 timber sale projects do not require changes to the scenery management program. The 2008 Forest Plan and 1997 Forest Plan programs are essentially the same in their environmental effects.

However, the analysis for the Navy Final EIS was updated to use the Scenery Management System instead of the Visual Management System.

I have determined that this decision and the Navy Final EIS are consistent with the transition language of the decision for the 2008 Forest Plan Amendment.

Public Involvement

Public involvement has been instrumental in identifying issues and creating alternatives for this project and assisting me in making a more-informed decision for the Navy Timber Sale project. Public meetings, Federal Register notices, newspaper ads, government-to-government consultation, group and individual meetings, and the Tongass National Forest Schedule of Proposed Actions were used to seek input for this project. See Chapter 1 of the Navy Final EIS for information and timing of public involvement activities. A complete list of all members of the public, groups, and agencies that received a copy of the Draft EIS for review is in Chapter 4, Navy Draft EIS.

Comments received regarded subsistence, roads and access, wildlife species and habitat, fish, cumulative effects, roadless areas, wilderness, timber supply, demand and economics, karst and caves, soil stability, water quality, wetlands, old-growth habitat and reserves, recreation, harvest methods and prescriptions, and windthrow. Responses to these comments are in Appendix B of the Navy Final EIS.

Project Record

The project record for this project includes the Draft EIS and Final EIS, Forest Plan, all material incorporated by reference and other critical materials produced during the environmental analysis of this project. The project record is available for review at the Wrangell Ranger District.

Mitigation

The analysis documented in the Final EIS discloses the possible adverse effects of implementing the actions proposed under each alternative. Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines were formulated to mitigate or reduce these effects. This direction was applied in the development of the project alternatives, including the Selected Alternative, and in the design of the harvest units and roads. Appendix 1 (Unit Cards) and Appendix 2 (Road Cards) of the Record of Decision discuss any specific mitigation measures for the Selected Alternative.

To reduce the spread of invasive plants into new areas, the following mitigation measures will apply:

- Off-road equipment will be cleaned to remove seeds, vegetative matter and other debris, according to the timber sale contract, to help reduce the spread of invasive plant species.
- Use of hay or straw bales for erosion control will not be allowed. Materials that comply with Tongass National Forest standard seed mixture (FSM 2080 TNF supplement R10 2000-2007-1) will be used for erosion control where necessary.

Monitoring

Monitoring of the Selected Alternative will be done during implementation and as part of the Forest Plan monitoring program. In addition, two project-specific monitoring activities will be done:

- Four units (37, 58, 60, and 61) will be planted with western red and Alaskan yellow-cedar to minimize the effects of porcupine damage. Survival surveys will be conducted on these units after the first and third full growing season following completion of planting.
- Prior to closing or storing NFS roads that were newly constructed for this project, the roads will be surveyed for high-priority invasive plants. If any new infestations are detected, a treatment strategy will be developed and implemented.

Findings Required By Law

Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) of 1980; Section 810

Subsistence Evaluation and Findings: A subsistence evaluation was conducted for the six alternatives, in accordance with Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) Section 810. An ANILCA 810 subsistence hearing was conducted in Wrangell, Alaska in June 2008.

This evaluation indicates that the potential foreseeable effects from the Selected Alternative may have a significant possibility of a significant restriction of subsistence use of deer. The potential foreseeable effects from the Selected Alternative will not have a significant possibility of a significant restriction of subsistence uses for bear, furbearers, marine mammals, waterfowl, salmon, other finfish, shellfish, and other foods such as berries and roots (see Chapter 3, Subsistence section, in the Final EIS).

Bald Eagle Protection Act

The Selected Alternative complies with the Bald Eagle Protection Act. An Interagency Agreement between the Forest Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) restricts management activities within 330 feet of an eagle nest site.

Clean Air Act of 1970 (as amended)

Emissions from the implementation of the Selected Alternative will be of short duration and are not expected to exceed State of Alaska ambient air quality standards (18 AAC 50).

Clean Water Act (1977, as amended)

Project activities meet all applicable State of Alaska Water Quality Standards. Congress intended the Clean Water Act of 1972 (Public Law 92-500) as amended in 1977 (Public Law 95-217) and 1987 (Public Law 100-4) to protect and improve the quality of water resources and maintain their beneficial uses. Section 313 of the Clean Water Act and Executive Order 12088 of January 23, 1987 address Federal agency compliance and consistency with water pollution control mandates. Agencies must be consistent with requirements that apply to "any governmental entity" or private person. Compliance is to be in line with "all Federal, State, interstate, and local requirements,

administrative authority, and process and sanctions respecting the control and abatement of water pollution."

The Clean Water Act (Sections 208 and 319) recognized the need for control strategies for nonpoint source pollution. The National Nonpoint Source Policy (December 12, 1984), the Forest Service Nonpoint Strategy (January 29, 1985), and the USDA Nonpoint Source Water Quality Policy (December 5, 1986) provide a protection and improvement emphasis for soil and water resources and water-related beneficial uses. Soil and water conservation practices (BMPs) are recognized as the primary control mechanisms for nonpoint source pollution on National Forest System lands. The EPA supports this perspective in their guidance, "Nonpoint Source Controls and Water Quality Standards" (August 19, 1987).

The Forest Service must apply BMPs that are consistent with the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act (AFRPA) to achieve Alaska Water Quality Standards. The site-specific application of BMPs, with a monitoring and feedback mechanism, is the approved strategy for controlling nonpoint source pollution as defined by Alaska's Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Strategy (2007). In 1997, the State approved the BMPs in the Forest Service Soil and Water Conservation Handbook (FSH 2509.22, October 1996) as consistent with AFRPA. This handbook is incorporated by reference into the Forest Plan and this project.

A discharge of dredge or fill material from normal silvicultural activities such as harvesting for the production of forest products is exempt from Section 404 permitting requirements in waters of the United States, including wetlands (404(f)(1)(A)). Forest roads qualify for this exemption only if they are constructed and maintained in accordance with BMPs to assure that flow and circulation patterns and chemical and biological characteristics of the waters are not impaired (404(f)(1)(E)). The BMPs that must be followed are specified in 33 CFR 323.4(a). These specific BMPs are incorporated into the Soil and Water Conservation Handbook under BMP 12.5.

The design of harvest units for the Selected Alternative was guided by standards, guidelines and direction in the Forest Plan and applicable Forest Service Manuals and Handbooks. The unit cards and road cards (Appendices 1 and 2) contain specific details on practices prescribed to prevent or reduce nonpoint sediment sources.

Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) of 1972 (as amended)

Under the Coastal Zone Management Act, Federal activities that affect any land or water use or any natural resource of the coastal zone must be conducted in a manner that is consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the enforceable policies of the applicable state coastal management program. On December 4, 2006, the State of Alaska issued a final consistency response concurring with the Forest Service's General Consistency Determination (GCD) for Tongass National Forest Timber Sales (State I.D. No. AK 0608-10J). Under this GCD, all timber harvest and associated activities conducted on the Tongass National Forest - except for those that require State or Federal permits - have been determined to be consistent with the enforceable policies of the Alaska Coastal Management Program (ACMP). The Selected Alternative for the Navy project area does not include any activities that require a State or Federal permit. Accordingly, it is entirely within the scope of the GCD. Consequently, no individual consistency determination or review is required.

Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 (as amended)

A biological assessment was prepared and sent to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) as part of the Section 7 consultation under the Endangered Species Act. USFWS and NMFS concurred with the findings of “not likely to adversely affect” the federally listed species. The biological assessment is included in the project record.

Federal Cave Resource Protection Act of 1988

There are few occurrences of carbonate rock and associated cave resources in the Navy project area. Field reconnaissance identified areas of concern. Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines will provide protection of these areas. The activities of the Selected Alternative will not have a direct, indirect, or cumulative effect on any significant cave in the Navy project area.

Forest Service Transportation Final Administrative Policy (Roads Rule)

The Final EIS and this ROD are prepared to be consistent with the Forest Service Transportation Final Administrative Policy and the Tongass National Forest Level Road Analysis (January 2003), Wrangell Ranger District Road Analysis (August 2006) and the Wrangell Ranger District Access Travel Management Plan (July 2007). I have determined that the proposed road system is “the minimum road system needed for safe and efficient travel and for administration, utilization, and protection of National Forest System lands” (36 CFR 212.5).

Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act

The potential effects of the project on Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) are discussed in Chapter 3 of the Final EIS. This discussion includes reference to the Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation Act that requires the Forest Service to consult with the National Marine Fisheries Service on projects that may affect EFH. It also includes a description of the EFH in the project area, a description of the proposed activities, and a description of the measures that will protect these essential habitats.

The Draft EIS was provided to the National Marine Fisheries Service to initiate formally the consultation process according to the agreement dated June 26, 2007 between the Forest Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service on the method to complete EFH consultation using National Environmental Policy Act Procedures. NMFS concurred with the findings that the Navy Timber Sale “may adversely affect EFH because of cumulative effects of past harvest” and submitted recommendations. These recommendations and the responses are located in Appendix B of the Navy Final EIS. These factors were considered in evaluating the potential effects of the alternatives on EFH and the development of mitigation measures. Information on the mitigation measures and applicable Standards and Guidelines to minimize effects to EFH are discussed in Chapter 3 of the Final EIS and Appendices 1 and 2 of this ROD. A copy of the Final EIS, which includes the specified assessment, has been sent to NMFS for review.

Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972

Actions authorized in the Selected Alternative will not have a direct, indirect, or cumulative effect on marine mammals. Marine mammal viewing guidelines administered by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and enforced by the Coast Guard are sufficient for their protection. Contractors, purchasers and employees will be required to follow provisions on Marine Wildlife Guidelines, including special

prohibitions on approaching humpback whales in Alaska as defined in 50 CFR 224.103. NMFS administers the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), which prohibits the “take” of all marine mammal species in U.S. waters. “Take” is defined as “to harass, hunt, capture, or kill, or attempt to harass, hunt, capture, or kill any marine mammal”. Harassment is defined in the MMPA as “any act of pursuit, torment, or annoyance which has the potential to injure a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild; or has the potential to disturb a marine mammal stock in the wild by causing disruption of behavior patterns, including, but not limited to, migration, breathing, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering.”

National Forest Management Act (NFMA) of 1976 (as amended)

The National Forest Management Act (NFMA) requires specific determinations in the Record of Decision: consistency with existing Forest Plans and FSM 2410.3, R10 Supp. 2400-2002-1 (5/7/2002), a determination of clearcutting as the optimal method of harvesting, if used, and specific authorizations to create openings over 100 acres in size (Forest Plan, p. 4-72). Information and rationale used to develop unit prescriptions is shown on unit cards (Appendix 1 of the ROD), in Chapter 3 of the Final EIS, and in the project record.

Clearcutting as the Optimal Method of Harvesting

The Forest Plan (p. 4-71 to 4-72) and 1997 Forest Plan EIS (Appendix G, p. G-7 to G-9) give guidance on when to use even-aged management. Clearcutting (an even-aged method) is used in this project to preclude or minimize the occurrence of potentially adverse impacts from wind, where the wind damage potential is moderate to high. Clearcutting is also used to remove or reduce mistletoe infestations, logging damage or other factors affecting forest health. Specific information and rationale for use of this prescription is shown in the silvicultural prescriptions (which are a part of the project record), in the introduction to the unit cards and in the individual unit cards (ROD Appendix 1), and in Chapter 3 of the Final EIS. Where used, this prescription has been deemed optimal related to site-specific considerations as described above.

Harvest Openings Over 100 Acres in Size

The Navy Timber Sale project complies with all resource integration and management requirements of 36 CFR 219, through application of Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines at the project level. An opening may be created in excess of 100 acres with the combination of Units 96 and 97; this will be determined at time of implementation. The effects of this opening were considered in the analysis for the Selected Alternative.

Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan as Amended

This decision complies with the Forest Plan for the Tongass National Forest. The activities authorized in this decision are consistent with the transition language of the decision of the 2008 Forest Plan, as previously explained.

National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 (as amended)

Under the provisions of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, I have made a determination of “No Historic Properties Affected”. There will be no effects to sites listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Heritage resource surveys of various intensities were conducted in the analysis area in accordance with the Regional Inventory Strategy. By following the provisions of the Programmatic Agreement, signed July 29, 2002, between the Forest Service, Alaska

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State Historic Preservation Officer, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, this action complies with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

The State Historic Preservation Officer has been consulted, in accordance with Section 106 of the NHPA and 36 CFR Part 800. The Forest Service has satisfied the consultation process with the State Historic Preservation Officer. Native communities have been contacted and public comment encouraged. No effects on known heritage resources are anticipated.

Tongass Timber Reform Act (TTRA) of 1990

Forest Plan Riparian Standards and Guidelines apply to the Selected Alternative and no commercial timber harvest will occur within 100 feet of any Class I stream or any Class II stream flowing directly into a Class I stream, as required in Section 103 of the TTRA. The design and implementation direction for the Selected Alternative incorporates best management practices (BMPs) and Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines for the protection of all stream classes.

Timber harvested under the Selected Alternative will provide part of the timber supply to the Tongass National Forest's timber program as stated in Section 101 of TTRA - *"... the Secretary shall, to the extent consistent with providing for the multiple use and sustained yield of all renewable forest resources, seek to provide a supply of timber from the Tongass National Forest which (1) meets the annual market demand for timber from such forest and (2) meets the annual market demand from such forest for each planning cycle."*

Executive Orders

Executive Order 11988 (Floodplains)

Executive Order 11988 directs Federal agencies to take action to avoid, to the extent possible, the long- and short-term adverse effects associated with the occupancy and modification of floodplains. The numerous streams in the Navy project area make it essentially impossible to avoid all floodplains during timber harvest and road construction. Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines limit riparian harvest, to the extent feasible, to facilitate road construction and logging operations. The amount of road in floodplains will be minimized whenever possible as stated in the BMPs. Roads may be constructed in or through floodplains subject to the design requirements of the BMPs.

Executive Order 11990 (Wetlands)

Executive Order 11990 requires Federal agencies to avoid, to the extent possible, the long- and short-term adverse effects associated with the destruction or modification of wetlands. Techniques and practices required by the Forest Service serve to maintain the wetland attributes including values and functions. There will be minimal loss of wetlands with the Selected Alternative, primarily due to road construction. In some areas, soil moisture regime and vegetation composition or structure may be altered; however, these altered acres would still be classified as wetlands and functions as wetlands in the ecosystem.

Road construction through wetlands is avoided to the extent practicable. Where wetlands cannot be avoided, road construction will adhere to State-approved BMPs, which include at a minimum the Federal baseline provisions in 33 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) 323.

Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice)

Executive Order 12898 directs Federal agencies to state clearly in the EIS whether a disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental impact on minority populations, low-income populations, or Indian tribes is likely to result from the proposed action and any alternatives. The Executive Order specifically directs agencies to consider patterns of subsistence hunting and fishing when an agency action may affect fish or wildlife. Environmental justice has been addressed in Chapter 3 of the Final EIS.

Environmental justice was not identified as an issue for the project because: 1) No communities are identified as being adversely affected in this area. 2) None of the alternatives would have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on the health of the environment of the minority or low-income populations that use the Navy Timber Sale area.

Executive Order 12962 (Aquatic Systems, Recreational Fisheries)

Executive Order 12962 requires Federal agencies to evaluate the effects of proposed activities on aquatic systems and recreational fisheries. The Selected Alternative minimizes the effects on aquatic systems through project design, application of standards and guidelines, BMPs, and site-specific mitigation measures. In the Selected Alternative, recreational fishing opportunities would remain essentially the same as the current condition because aquatic habitats are protected through implementation of BMPs and riparian buffers.

Executive Order 13007 (Indian Sacred Sites)

Executive Order 13007, Indian Sacred Sites, provides presidential direction to Federal agencies to consider the protection of American Indian sacred sites and allow access, where feasible. In a government-to-government relationship, the tribal government is responsible for notifying the agency of the existence of a sacred site. A sacred site is defined as a site that has sacred significance due to established religious beliefs or ceremonial uses, and which has a specific, discrete, and delineated location that has been identified by the tribe. Tribal governments or their authorized representatives have not identified any specific sacred site locations in the project area.

Executive Order 13112 (Invasive Species)

Executive Order 13112 requires Federal agencies (in part) to:

- evaluate whether the proposed activities will affect the status of invasive species;
- not carry out activities that promote the introduction or spread of invasive species unless it has determined that the benefits of such action outweigh the potential harm caused by invasive species; and
- take all feasible and prudent measure to minimize risk of harm in conjunction with the actions.

The Selected Alternative implements specific measures to minimize the introduction and spread of invasive species.

Executive Order 13175 (Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments)

Executive Order 13175 directs Federal agencies to respect tribal self-government, sovereignty, and tribal rights, and to engage in regular and meaningful government-to-government consultation with tribes on proposed actions with tribal implications.

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The following federally recognized tribal governments and organizations were consulted or provided information about this project:

- Wrangell Cooperative Association
- Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
- Sealaska Corporation
- Kake Tribal Corporation
- Organized Village of Kake
- Petersburg Indian Association

Tribal concerns were considered in the environmental analysis. Tribal consultation does not imply that the tribes endorse the Proposed Action or any of the alternatives.

Executive Order 13186 (Migratory Birds)

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (amended in 1936 and 1972) prohibits the taking of migratory birds, unless authorized by the Secretary of Interior. The law provides the primary mechanism to regulate waterfowl hunting seasons and bag limits, but its scope is not just limited to waterfowl. The migratory species that may stay in the area utilize most, if not all, of the habitats described in the analysis for breeding, nesting, and raising their young. The effects on these habitats were analyzed for this project.

The decision will not have a significant direct, indirect, or cumulative effect on any migratory bird species in the project area. There may be direct moderate effects on individuals or small groups and their nests from the harvest of timber or the disturbance caused by harvest and related activities.

Executive Order 13443 (Facilitation of Hunting Heritage and Wildlife Conservation)

Executive Order 13443 directs Federal agencies to facilitate the expansion and enhancement of hunting opportunities and the management of game species and their habitat. The analysis considered and disclosed the effects on hunting activities. The Selected Alternative will maintain the current hunting opportunities by adhering to the Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines that maintain habitat for hunted species.

Federal and State Permits

Federal and State permits necessary to implement the authorized activities are listed at the end of Chapter 1 in the Final EIS.

Implementation Process

Implementation of this decision may occur no sooner than 50 days following publication of the legal notice of the decision in the *Ketchikan Daily News*, published in Ketchikan, Alaska.

Timber harvest activities in the project area will take place on lands found suitable for timber production under provisions of the National Forest Management Act. The timber may be offered in one or more sales.

This project will be implemented in accordance with Forest Service Manual (FSM) and Forest Service Handbook (FSH) direction for Timber Sale Project Implementation in FSM 2430 and FSH 2409.18. This direction provides a bridge between project planning and implementation and will ensure execution of the actions, environmental standards, and mitigations approved by this decision, and compliance with the TTRA and other laws. All applicable best management practices (BMPs) will be applied to the Selected Alternative.

Implementation of all activities authorized by this Record of Decision will be monitored to ensure that they are carried out as planned and described in the Final EIS.

Appendices 1 and 2 to this Record of Decision contain the unit and road cards for the Selected Alternative. These cards are an integral part of this decision because they document the specific resource concerns, management objectives, and mitigation measures to govern the layout of the harvest units and construction of roads. These cards will be used during the implementation process to assure that all aspects of the project are implemented within applicable standards and guidelines and that resource effects will not be greater than those described in the Final EIS. Similar cards will be updated to document any changes to the planned unit and road cards, which may occur during implementation. Any proposed changes to the design, location, standards and guidelines, or other mitigation measures for the project will also be documented at time of implementation.

Process for Change During Implementation

Proposed changes to the authorized project actions will be subject to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the National Forest Management Act of 1976, Section 810 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, the Tongass Timber Reform Act, the Coastal Zone Management Act, and other laws concerning such changes.

In determining whether and what kind of NEPA action is required for changes during implementation, the Forest Supervisor will consider the criteria in the Code of Federal Regulations (40 CFR 1502.9(c)), and Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 1909.15, sec. 18 to determine whether to supplement or revise an existing environmental impact statement. The Forest Supervisor will determine whether the proposed change is a substantial change to the Selected Alternative as planned and already approved, and whether the change is relevant to environmental concerns. Connected or interrelated changes to particular areas or specific activities will be considered together in making this determination. The cumulative impacts of these changes will also be considered.

Minor changes are expected during implementation to meet better on-site resource management and protection objectives. Minor adjustments to unit boundaries are also likely during final layout to improve logging system efficiency. This will usually entail adjusting the boundary to coincide with logical logging setting boundaries. Changes made during implementation will be reviewed, documented, and approved by the Responsible Official.

Right to Appeal

This decision is subject to administrative review (appeal) pursuant to Title 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 215. Individuals or organizations who submitted comments during the comment period specified at CFR 215.6 may appeal this decision. The notice of appeal must be in writing, meet the appeal content requirements at CFR 215.14 and be filed with the Appeal Deciding Officer:

Denny Bschor, Regional Forester
Alaska Region
US Department of Agriculture
709 W. 9th Street
P.O. Box 21628
Juneau, AK 99802-1628

Email address: appeals-alaska-regional-office@fs.fed.us
Fax (907) 586-7840

The Notice of Appeal, including attachments, must be filed (regular mail, fax, e-mail express delivery or messenger service) with the Appeal Deciding Officer at the correct location within 45 calendar days of the date that the legal notification of this decision is published in the *Ketchikan Daily News*, the official newspaper of record. The publication date in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an appeal. Those wishing to appeal this decision should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source.

Hand-delivered appeals will be accepted at the Regional Office during normal business hours (8:00 am through 4:30 pm) Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

Implementation of decisions subject to appeal pursuant to 36 CFR Part 215, may occur on, but not before, 5 business days from the close of the appeal-filing period, if no appeals are received.

For additional information concerning this decision, contact Mark Hummel, District Ranger, Wrangell Ranger District, P.O. Box 51, Wrangell, AK 99929, or call (907) 874-7595.



FORREST COLE
Forest Supervisor

3.10.09
Date

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Record of Decision

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