

## TITLE 2700 - LAND USE MANAGEMENT

2710.3 - Policy. Stikine Area policy on occupancy by float houses is much the same as established policy for any exclusive use requests on the National Forest. Each such request is handled on a case-by-case basis. The first test of any exclusive use request will be: Is there State or private land available to fill the need? If the answer is yes, exclusive use requests will be denied.

Cost is not a consideration; nor is solving a trespass by issuing a permit. In all cases, the requesting party is responsible for exploring all options and documenting this effort to the satisfaction of the Forest officer. Permits will not be issued without clear evidence that the National Forest is the only land available or suitable for the particular use. Forest officers preparing special use reports will make a statement on the report to this effect.

The second test prior to approving a float house permit, of course, is the environmental assessment process. The EA will recommend if the permit will or will not be issued; where it can be issued to reduce environmental impacts now and in the future; and any mitigating measures that must be required in the permit. An approved EA will accompany all applications and use reports for exclusive use permits on the Stikine Area.

A last test that will be used prior to issuing a permit for a float house that will be tied to trees on the National Forest is to require evidence that a State tidelands permit has been issued, is in the process (for example, a lease), or has been waived by the State. In addition to this, if the float house is to be in one location for more than 90 days and the location is in navigable water, the same test will be required of the prospective permittee for a Corps of Engineers permit.

If either test fails, a permit will not be issued by the Forest Service.

The State of Alaska, as the owners and managers of tidelands, and the Corps of Engineers, as the guardians of the navigable waters in Alaska, cannot do their jobs if upland owners fail to work with them. The line between uplands, tidelands, and navigable water, at any point in time, is rather thin. To accomplish any type of management along our coastline, agencies must all work together. Another very important point is that if the Forest Service is going to accomplish the job of management on the National Forest, we need to be able to work with the State and Corps.