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Department of  
Agriculture

Forest Service

Tongass  
National Forest  
R10-MB-710a

June 2011



# Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan

## Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Volume A, DEIS

Tongass National Forest  
Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District  
Ketchikan, Alaska



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**Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan EIS - Key Acronyms and Other Terms**

ACMP	Alaska Coastal Management Plan	NAGPRA	Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act
ADF&G	Alaska Department of Fish and Game	NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
AIRFA	American Indian Religious Freedom Act	NFS	National Forest System
ANCSA	Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act	NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
ANILCA	Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act	NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
BMP	Best Management Practices	NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality	ROS	Recreation Opportunity Spectrum
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations	RSNT	Remote Setting Nature Tours
CZMA	Coastal Zone Management Act	SD	Service Day
DN	Decision Notice	SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
EA	Environmental Assessment	SOPA	Schedule of Proposed Actions
ESA	Endangered Species Act	SUA	Special Use Authorization
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact	T&E	Threatened and Endangered
FSH	Forest Service Handbook	Forest Plan	Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan
FSM	Forest Service Manual	TTRA	Tongass Timber Reform Act
IDT	Interdisciplinary Team	USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
KMRD	Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District	VCU	Value Comparison Unit
LAC	Limits of Acceptable Change (process)	WA	Wilderness Area
LNT	Leave No Trace		
LUD	Land Use Designation		

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Front Cover: Margaret Creek bear viewing site.

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Department of  
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File Code: 1950

Date: June 9, 2011

Dear Planning Participant,

Enclosed is your copy of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan project on the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District (KMRD), Tongass National Forest. The DEIS proposes four alternatives for allocating (distributing) outfitter and guide permits on KMRD including the "no-action" alternative. The action alternatives would allocate between 34,900 and 74,000 service days annually to outfitters and guides for recreational use on National Forest System Lands within KMRD. The no-action alternative (Alternative A) would allocate about 24,200 service days to outfitters and guides based on the highest use by area between 2005 and 2009. My preferred alternative, at this point, is Alternative B, the Proposed Action, which has an allocation of about 54,000 service days. However, any of the alternatives may be selected in the Record of Decision for the Final EIS.

Reviewers should provide the Forest Service with their comments during the review period of the DEIS. This will enable the Forest Service to analyze and respond to all the comments at one time and to use information acquired in the preparation of the Final EIS, thus avoiding undue delay in the decision-making process. Written, oral and electronic comment of the DEIS will be accepted for 45 calendar days following the date of publication of the notice of availability (NOA) in the *Federal Register*. Comments on the DEIS should be specific and should address the adequacy of the statement and the merits of the alternatives discussed (40 CFR 1503.3). The Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) has also developed a guide entitled, *A Citizen's Guide to the NEPA Having Your Voice Heard* to help citizens and organizations who are concerned about the environmental effects of federal decision making to effectively participate in Federal agencies' environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This guide can be accessed via the web at [http://ceq.hss.doe.gov/nepa/Citizens\\_Guide\\_Dec07.pdf](http://ceq.hss.doe.gov/nepa/Citizens_Guide_Dec07.pdf)

The publication date of the NOA in the Federal Register is the exclusive means for calculating the comment period for this DEIS.

Please send written comments to:

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3031 Tongass Ave.  
Ketchikan, AK 99901  
e-mail: [comments-alaska-tongass-ketchikan-mistyfiord@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-alaska-tongass-ketchikan-mistyfiord@fs.fed.us), subject line: "KMRD O/G DEIS"

For appeal eligibility rights, submissions from individuals or a representative from each organization submitting comments must be signed or verification provided upon request. An electronic username is insufficient for electronic comment submittals. Comments must be



received during the 45-day comment period. Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be part of the public record. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, anonymous comments will not provide the respondent with standing to participate in subsequent administrative review or judicial review.

Oral comments can be provided at the above office during normal business hours via telephone or in person, or at an official agency function (i.e. public meeting) that is designed to elicit public comments. Subsistence hearings are expected to occur between the Draft EIS and Final EIS.

Additional copies of the DEIS are available for review in several formats including electronic and hard copy. The EIS can be found on the internet at [http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/tongass/projects/nepa\\_project.shtml?project=32817](http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/tongass/projects/nepa_project.shtml?project=32817) or, if you prefer more history of the project at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/tongass/districts/ketchikan/recreationplanning.shtml> and look for the link to the DEIS. For more information, contact Sue Jennings, the project team leader, at the Petersburg Forest Service office at 907-772-5864 during regular business hours, Monday to Friday, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm.

Your interest in the management of the Tongass National Forest is appreciated.

Sincerely,



JEFFREY DEFREEST  
District Ranger

ENCLOSURE

# Draft Environmental Impact Statement

## Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan

**Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Alaska Region, Tongass National Forest, Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District**

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### Abstract

The USDA Forest Service proposes to authorize outfitter and guide operations and allocate 53,997 service days annually to guided use in the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District, Tongass National Forest. This proposed action authorizes outfitter and guide operations through the issuance of special use permits. Adaptive management is being considered which could raise, reduce, or adjust the allocation dependent on resource conditions. The actions analyzed in this Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) are designed to implement direction contained in the 2008 Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). The DEIS describes four alternatives that provide different combinations of outfitter and guide allocations in different spatial locations. The alternatives would allow for or allocate between 24,245 and 74,005 service days annually to outfitters and guides within the project area. The significant issues addressed by the alternatives and this EIS include: 1) outfitter and guide economics; 2) areas popular with unguided users; 3) historic and cultural properties; 4) wilderness; and 5) wildlife, subsistence, and cultural and traditional uses. The preferred alternative at this point is Alternative B, the Proposed Action. However, any of the alternatives may be selected in the Record of Decision for the Final EIS.

Reviewers should provide the Forest Service with their comments during the review period of the draft environmental impact statement. This will enable the Forest Service to analyze and respond to the comments at one time and to use information acquired in the preparation of the final environmental impact statement, thus avoiding undue delay in the decision-making process. Reviewers have an obligation to structure their participation in the National Environmental Policy Act process so that it is meaningful and alerts the agency to the reviewers' position and contentions. *Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. v. NRDC*, 435 U.S. 519, 553 (1978). Environmental objections that could have been raised at the draft stage may be waived if not raised until after completion of the final environmental impact statement. *City of Angoon v. Hodel* (9th Circuit, 1986) and *Wisconsin Heritages, Inc. v. Harris*, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980). Comments on the draft environmental impact statement should be specific and should address the adequacy of the statement and the merits of the alternatives discussed (40 CFR 1503.3).

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# Summary



# SUMMARY

## Introduction ---

The Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District (KMRD), U.S. Forest Service, has prepared this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other relevant federal and state laws and regulations, to analyze how to allocate visitor capacity on KMRD. The allocation will set use levels for outfitter and guide permits but will not set use levels for unguided visitors. Unguided visitors (those people visiting the Tongass National Forest without an outfitter or a guide) can continue to enjoy KMRD recreation and subsistence opportunities in the same way they do now. Guided users, in this EIS, are those people visiting the Tongass who use the services of an outfitter or a guide; as used throughout this EIS, guided use also includes use of an outfitter. This EIS discloses the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts that would result from the proposed action and alternatives.

## Project Area Description ---

The project area consists of the National Forest System (NFS) lands encompassing the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District (KMRD) of the Tongass National Forest (Figure 1-1). The KMRD encompasses over 3.2 million acres of temperate rainforest, mountain peaks, glaciers, alpine tundra, muskegs, lakes, rivers, and streams. Approximately two-thirds of these acres are in Misty Fiords National Monument Wilderness. It encompasses the communities of Ketchikan, Hyder, Metlakatla, Meyers Chuck, Saxman, and Loring. A map displaying the project area is presented in Figure 1-2. For the purpose of this project, KMRD is divided into 28 recreation use areas<sup>1</sup> (see Figure 1-2 and Table 2-1 in Chapter 2 and Appendix B).

## Purpose and Need for Action ---

### Need

Since there is a demonstrated need for commercial service(s) and these services are deemed appropriate (Appendix A), the Forest Service may issue Special Use Authorizations (SUAs) to individual(s) or organization(s) (USDA 2008b, p. 4-46) to provide the services. This project proposal also responds to Forest Service Manual and Handbook direction (FSM 2720 and FSH 2709.11), which allows for issuance of priority use permits after a needs assessment and visitor capacity analysis have been completed to identify the public or agency need for outfitting and guiding activities and assess the amount of use that may be conducted without detrimental social and environmental impacts. Multi-year priority use permits allow

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<sup>1</sup> Recreation use area boundaries were determined at public meetings in Ketchikan, AK. These use areas were used to analyze seasonal visitor capacities and will be used to administer recreation special use permits for the KMRD. The use areas only aid in analysis and administration and will not be permanently assigned through the Forest Plan or any other planning document.

## ***Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan***

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outfitters and guides to make financial commitments necessary to continue providing service to the public.

A District-wide outfitter and guide plan is needed because the current permitting process:

- Does not satisfy Forest Service direction for issuing long-term priority use permits,
- Does not provide the District Ranger with a District-wide strategy for reducing conflicts between guided and unguided visitors and ensuring a range of recreational opportunities are offered across KMRD,
- Does not allow the Forest Service to respond to special use permit applications in a timely manner because, without a comprehensive analysis, each application involves a separate analysis and scoping process consistent with the NEPA, and
- Does not fully address cumulative impacts of outfitter and guide use on forest resources, including wilderness character.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this project is to:

- Determine the amount of outfitter and guide use to allocate for each of the 28 recreation use areas on the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District,
- Satisfy Forest Service direction for issuance of long-term, priority use permits,
- Provide opportunities for guided use while minimizing resource impacts and conflicts between guided and unguided visitors,
- Provide standards and indicators for monitoring social conditions across KMRD,
- Develop an adaptive management strategy for adjusting guided use allocations based on monitoring information collected during the life of this plan,
- Improve the Forest Service's ability to process permits in a timely manner, and
- Address cumulative impacts of outfitter and guide use on forest resources, including wilderness character.

### **Proposed Action**

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The action proposed by the Forest Service to meet the purpose and need is to authorize outfitter and guide operations through the issuance of special use permits based on the Determination of Need for Commercial Uses on the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District (Appendix A of this EIS, USDA Forest Service 2008a), visitor capacity estimates, and guided use allocations for KMRD's 28 recreation use areas.

The proposed action would authorize the issuance of outfitter and guide permits for KMRD. Of the estimated annual visitor capacity of approximately 148,000 service days, the proposed action would allocate 53,997 service days annually for outfitter and guide use on the KMRD (5,126 service days in the spring, 44,416 service days in the summer, and 4,455 service days in the fall (see Table 2-3, and Figures 2-3 and 2-4 at the end of Chapter 2). The proposed action allocates 10 to 75 percent of the visitor capacity in 26 of the recreation use areas to outfitters and guides during the summer season and 10 to 50 percent during the spring and

fall seasons. Outfitting and guiding would not be allowed in two of the 28 recreation use areas.

Due to low actual and anticipated use by outfitters and guides in the winter season (October 21- April 19) no allocation of use in the winter is being proposed at this time. See Chapter 2, Elements Common to All Action Alternatives for a full description.

Under the Proposed Action, all outfitter and guide operations will be subject to area-wide and site-specific management elements and mitigation measures to protect natural and historic resources and minimize crowding and conflicts between guided and unguided visitors. These management elements and mitigations are described in Chapter 2 and Appendix B.

## **Issues**

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The following five issues were determined to be significant and within the scope of the project decision. The IDT developed alternatives to the Proposed Action to address these issues. Additional issues were considered but did not form the basis for an alternative; they are discussed under Other Issues and Concerns in Chapter 1.

Units of measure were defined to identify how each alternative responds to a significant issue. Measures are shown in Chapter 1 and discussed in Chapter 3.

## **Significant Issues**

Issues for the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District Outfitter and Guide Management Plan project were identified through public and internal scoping.

### **Issue 1:**

Limiting the amount and location of outfitter and guide use may not adequately provide for industry stability and growth.

### **Issue 2:**

Outfitter and guide use may cause crowding, noise, and disturbance, particularly in locations popular with unguided users.

### **Issue 3:**

Allowing outfitter and guide use in 04 Duke and 21 Percy Hotspur Mary use areas may affect historic properties, sacred sites and traditional cultural properties.

### **Issue 4:**

Noise associated with floatplanes and boats in and around Misty Fiords National Monument Wilderness may negatively impact wilderness character.

### **Issue 5:**

Outfitter and guide use may negatively affect wildlife, subsistence uses, and cultural and traditional uses.

## **Alternative Descriptions**

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Alternative A (the No Action Alternative), the Proposed Action (Alternative B), and two other action alternatives are considered in detail. The other action alternatives represent different options of satisfying the Purpose and Need by responding with different emphases to the significant issues discussed in Chapter 1. Elements Common to all the Action Alternatives and Design Elements and Mitigation required by all the action alternatives are included in separate sections below and discussed further in Appendix B. Maps of all alternatives considered in detail are provided at the end of Chapter 2.

As described in Public Involvement in Chapter 1 and Appendix E of this EIS, the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District used a Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) public planning process prior to NEPA to determine public perceptions, desires, and needs regarding outfitter and guide use on the KMRD. This collaborative planning process was used to develop the visitor capacity and the proposed action alternative; it also formed the basis for the other action alternatives.

KMRD used public input to learn, define, and adjust the many components used to determine visitor capacity and to develop the Proposed Action for this analysis.

The other action alternatives in this EIS were designed to address resource issues brought forward by the Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) and Tribal entities as well as issues brought up during scoping, the KMRD open house, and during previous collaborative processes. To see full descriptions of the alternatives, see the “Alternative Descriptions” section of this EIS.

### **Alternative A (No Action)**

For this analysis, the No Action alternative is the current actual use by outfitters and guides on the KMRD. Under this alternative, outfitter and guide special use permits could be issued up to the highest actual use, by recreation use area, that occurred between 2005 and 2009. See Figure 1-2 for recreation use area locations. District-wide, that highest actual use level is 24,245 service days per year (calculated by taking the highest use between 2005 and 2009 per use area per season and adding these highest uses together to get a District total for the 182-day combined spring/summer/fall seasons). The highest guided use levels have been 741 service days in the spring, 23,424 service days in the summer, and 80 service days in the fall (Table 2-2). Using the current practice, under Alternative A no season of use would be identified on the permit.

A decision for Alternative A would only allow permitting up to the highest use level shown in Table 2-2; new NEPA would be required for higher use levels in any recreation use area. In Alternative A, use levels are used for comparison and no use is officially allocated to outfitters and guides. Alternative A recognizes that changes in permit requests could increase or decrease the use.

Management of the outfitter and guide special uses program would continue to allocate outfitter and guide use on a case by case basis. New permits or requests from existing permit holders to increase use above the highest actual use, shown under column “Alt. A” in Table 2-2 and 2-6, would require new NEPA. New permits can take a few weeks or several years depending on the amount of analysis needed and the availability of specialists to do the analysis.

Existing permit stipulations would continue to be implemented. New design criteria, mitigation measures, and stipulations brought forward in Appendix B of this EIS would not apply in this alternative.

## **Alternative C**

Using the estimated visitor capacity, this alternative allocates half to outfitters and guides in all recreation use areas. This equates to an allocation of 74,005 service days annually for outfitter and guide use on the KMRD (Table 2-4 and Figure 2-5 at the end of this chapter). Alternative C allocates 9,360 service days in the spring, 56,514 service days in the summer, and 8,131 service days in the fall for outfitter and guide use.

## **Alternative D**

Alternative D would allocate 34,904 service days annually for outfitter and guide use on the KMRD (see Table 2-5 and Figures 2-6 and 2-7 at the end of this chapter). Alternative D allocates 3,341 service days in the spring, 28,655 service days in the summer, and 2,908 service days in the fall for outfitter and guide use.

Adaptive management would be implemented in all the action alternatives:

## **Adaptive Management**

Adaptive management is a process of monitoring results and adjusting the chosen action to meet desired outcomes. In the future, if a recreation use area nears or exceeds the indicators and standards, or if unforeseen and unknown or substantial resource impacts occur as a result of implementing the selected alternative, the KMRD will use adaptive management and take administrative steps to address the areas of concern. The steps that cause the least impact to recreational visitors would be implemented first if there was no immediate threat to resources or facilities. Adaptive management may also be used to raise or lower allocation; see Chapter 2 of this EIS for details.

## ***Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan***

**Table S-1) Annual Outfitter and Guide Allocation in Service Days by Alternative and Use Area (for Alternative A, highest use is displayed for comparison)**

Recreation Use Area	Service Days Authorized (in 2009)	Carrying Capacity in Service Days	Annual Service Days Allocated			
			Alt. A (2005-2009 Highest Use)	Alt. B	Alt. C	Alt. D
01 West Misty	77	2,366	96	355	1,184	355
02 Northeast Misty	170	7,425	211	1,114	3,713	372
03 South Misty	229	6,989	220	1,048	3,495	699
04 Duke Island	0	2,839	22	0	1,420	0
05 South Misty Lakes	34	2,075	100	311	1,038	208
06 Misty Core Lakes	11,268	12,777	9,539	7,922	6,389	1,917
07 Walker Chickamin	60	1,747	37	262	873	174
08 Burroughs Unuk	45	1,965	11	294	983	98
09 Alava Princess Manzanita	45	3,550	29	710	1,776	533
10 Rudyerd Winstanley	247	3,931	155	393	1,966	197
11 Gravina Island	0	4,259	0	853	2,130	0
12 Bell Island	370	9,173	275	1,835	4,587	918
13 East Cleveland	93	4,969	230	994	2,485	248
14 West Cleveland	100	2,839	13	853	1,420	426
15 Wilson / Bakewell	183	2,020	54	404	1,010	302
16 Ketchikan Core SPNW	0	1,419	12	426	710	142
17 George Carroll Thorne	1599	5,679	813	3,655	2,841	2,571
18 Central Revilla SPNW	32	5,023	19	1,507	2,512	1,507
19 North Revilla	65	4,259	37	1,277	2,130	1,277
20 Hyder SPNW	20	2,129	4	639	1,065	639
21 Percy Hotspur Mary Islands	0	2,129	0	639	1,065	0
22 Hyder NA	5	1,419	27	710	710	710
23 Betton Island	8315	15,288	8,431	10,202	7,644	9,841
24 Ketchikan Core NA	2189	28,392	1,572	11,357	14,196	7,098
25 South Revilla NA	20	2,839	2	1,895	1,420	1,252
26 Central Revilla NA	28	2,839	0	1,136	1,420	751
27 Margaret Bay	2574	4,805	2,322	3,206	2,403	2,670
28 Naha Bay	0	2,779	14	0	1,420	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>27,768</b>	<b>147,923</b>	<b>24,245</b>	<b>53,997</b>	<b>74,005</b>	<b>34,905</b>

## Comparison of Alternatives

This section provides a summary of the effects of implementing each alternative.

**Table S-2) Comparison of Alternatives**

Issues and Resources	Alternative A Effects	Alternative B Effects	Alternative C Effects	Alternative D Effects
Issue 1: Limiting the amount and location of outfitter and guide use may not adequately provide for industry stability and growth.				
Number of service days allocated to outfitters and guides by recreation use area and number of service days allocated to outfitters and guides in 06 Misty Core Lakes, 11 Gravina Island, 17 George Carroll Thorne, and 27 Margaret Bay (Recreation Use Areas identified by outfitters and guides as desired locations)	The economics for outfitters and guides will remain the same, 24,245 service days per year. When an outfitter or guide applies for a special use permit, an individual environmental analysis will be completed, which may take several years dependent on the type of application and the availability of resource specialists. There is no room for outfitters and guides to expand their businesses with this level of use. In areas of concern to outfitters and guides, current highest use is 12,732 service days per year including 9,258 service days in 06 Misty Core Lakes.	Service days allocated to outfitters and guides increase to 53,997 service days annually (all seasons for the entire district). The service days available for outfitter and guide use increases by 29,752 service days, a 223% increase, over Alternative A. In areas of concern to outfitters and guides, Alternative B allocates 13,974 service days per year –an overall increase. In 06 Misty Core Lakes, there would be a decrease to 7,318 service days per year.	Service days allocated to outfitters and guides increase with this alternative to 74,005 service days annually (all seasons for the entire district) for outfitter and guide use. The service days available for outfitter and guide use increases by 49,760 service days, a 305% increase, over Alternative A. In areas of concern to outfitters and guides, Alternative C allocates 10,510 service days per year. This includes an increase in two recreation use areas, and a decrease in two areas. In 06 Misty Core Lakes, there would be a decrease to 4,879 service days per year.	Service days allocated to outfitters and guides increase with alternative D to 34,905 service days annually (all seasons for the entire district). The service days available for outfitter and guide use increases by 10,660 service days, a 144% increase, over Alternative A. In areas of concern to outfitters and guides, Alternative D allocates 6,019 service days per year. This includes an increase in two recreation use areas, and a decrease in one area. In 06 Misty Core Lakes, there would be a decrease to 1,464 service days per year.

## Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan

Issues and Resources	Alternative A Effects	Alternative B Effects	Alternative C Effects	Alternative D Effects
<p>Issue 2: Outfitter and guide use may cause crowding, noise, and disturbance, particularly in locations popular with unguided users (areas identified by unguided users as locations of interest or concern: 04 Duke Island, 08 Burroughs Unuk, 11 Gravina Island, 12 Bell Island, 13 East Cleveland, 17 George Carroll Thorne, 23 Betton Island, 24 Ketchikan Core NA, 27 Margaret Bay, and 28 Naha Bay).</p>				
<p>Number of service days on KMRD allocated to outfitters and guides - overall (see Tables 2-6 and 2-7 for individual recreation use areas)</p>	24,245 SDs*	53,997 SDs	74,005 SDs	34,905 SDs
<p>Number of service days allocated during the summer to outfitters and guides in unguided users' areas of interest or concern</p>	23,424 SDs*	26,472 SDs	30,631 SDs	19,699 SDs
<p>Effects to crowding, noise, and disturbance in unguided users' areas of interest or concern</p>	<p>Crowding and conflict are more likely under Alternative A than under all of the Action Alternatives because use is growing and design criteria (for Alternatives B, C, and D) would not be implemented and therefore would not minimize conflicts. However, of the alternatives, Alternative A is the least likely to disperse outfitter and guide use into less popular areas on the wilderness and nonwilderness portions of the KMRD and result in negative indirect social effects.</p>	<p>Minor impacts to unguided visitors' experiences in areas identified as highly-valued local areas. Design criteria and mitigation measures would ensure that crowding and impacts from outfitter and guide use are minimized in popular locations and attractions within these use areas</p>	<p>Of the action alternatives, Alternative C has the most effect. However, design criteria and mitigation measures would ensure that crowding and impacts from outfitter and guide use are minimized in popular locations and attractions within these use areas. By limiting the amount of outfitter and guide use in the 06 Misty Core Lakes Use Area, Alternative C has the potential to disperse flightseeing traffic and cause indirect effects to social conditions (e.g. crowding and additional floatplane landings) on adjacent waterways, particularly in Rudyerd Bay and Walker Cove.</p>	<p>Alternative D has the least likelihood of having a negative impact on unguided visitors' experiences in areas identified as highly-valued local areas. Alternative C has the highest potential to disperse flightseeing traffic and cause indirect effects to social conditions (e.g. crowding and additional floatplane landings) on waterways adjacent to NFS lands in Misty Fiords, particularly in Rudyerd Bay and Walker Cove.</p>

## Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Issues and Resources	Alternative A Effects	Alternative B Effects	Alternative C Effects	Alternative D Effects
Issue 3: Allowing outfitter and guide use in 04 Duke and 21 Percy Hotspur Mary use areas may affect historic properties, sacred sites and traditional cultural properties.				
Number of service days allocated to outfitters and guides in 04 Duke and 21 Percy Hotspur Mary use areas	22 SDs**	639 SDs	2,485 SDs	0 SDs
Effect to historic properties, sacred sites and traditional cultural properties	The activities in all four alternatives of this EIS will have No Affect on historic properties eligible to the National Register of Historic Places. However, commercial use of the “Duke Island area” may affect cultural and traditional uses of the area and has the potential to negatively affect the spiritual qualities or sacredness of the “Duke Island area.”	No Affect on historic properties; an increase in the number of service days allocated to Outfitters and guides would allow additional commercial use of these two use areas which may affect cultural and traditional uses and the potential to negatively affect the spiritual qualities or sacredness of the “Duke Island area.”	No Affect on historic properties; an increase in the number of service days allocated to Outfitters and guides would allow additional commercial use of these two use areas which may affect cultural and traditional uses and the potential to negatively affect the spiritual qualities or sacredness of the “Duke Island area.”	No Affect on historic properties; Alternative D has the least potential for effects and keeps the current status of management.
Issue 4: Noise associated with floatplanes and boats in and around Misty Fiords National Monument Wilderness may negatively impact wilderness character.				
Number of service days allocated in Misty Fiords National Monument Wilderness	10,398 SDs*	12,409 SDs	21,417 SDs	4,553 SDs
Number of service days allocated in 06 Misty Core Lakes	9,539 SDs*	7,922 SDs	6,389 SDs	1,917 SDs
Number of service days allocated to Misty Fiords Wilderness outside 06 Misty Core Lakes	859 SDs*	4,487 SDs	15,028 SDs	2,636 SDs

## Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan

Issues and Resources	Alternative A Effects	Alternative B Effects	Alternative C Effects	Alternative D Effects
Effects on opportunities for solitude due to noise	Alternative A allows for the highest amount of outfitter and guide use in 06 Misty Core Lakes. Guided floatplane tours in this Use Area have, and would continue to have, a major effect (as defined in Table 3-4) on opportunities for solitude in the core area of Misty Fiords. Under Alternative A, outfitter and guide use is the least likely to be dispersed to areas that currently offer a high level of opportunities for solitude.	Alternative B would improve opportunities for solitude in the 06 Misty Core Lakes Use Area because it allocates less use to outfitters and guides in this Use Area. Alternative B would have a minor negative effect on opportunities for solitude in the 01 West Misty, 02 Northeast Misty, and 05 South Misty Use Areas, by displacing floatplane traffic to these areas.	Alternative C would improve opportunities for solitude in the 06 Misty Core Lakes Use Area but would allow for a significant increase in motorized traffic associated with outfitter and guide floatplane landings in the 01 West Misty and 02 Northeast Misty Use Areas. An increase in floatplane traffic in these areas is inconsistent with Forest Plan direction to not disperse use in wilderness. Effects to wilderness character would be moderate to major.	Alternative D would significantly reduce the effects from guided floatplane landings in 06 Misty Core Lakes. Alternative D would allow for a small increase in motorized traffic associated with outfitter and guide floatplane landings in the 01 West Misty, 02 Northeast Misty, and 05 South Misty Use Areas. Effects on opportunities for solitude would be minor.
Issue 5: Outfitter and guide use may negatively affect wildlife, subsistence uses, and cultural and traditional uses.				
Effects on Wildlife	Potential effects to wildlife occur when disturbance from outfitter and guide activities overlap with crucial life phases; generally high or highest relative risk to wildlife because no allocation limit except visitor capacity	Potential effects to wildlife may occur when disturbance from outfitter and guide activities overlap with crucial life phases; generally low or lowest relative risk to wildlife because of the moderate allocation and inclusion of design elements.	Potential effects to wildlife may occur when disturbance from outfitter and guide activities overlap with crucial life phases; generally high or highest relative risk to wildlife because of the high allocation	Potential effects to wildlife may occur when disturbance from outfitter and guide activities overlap with crucial life phases; generally low or lowest relative risk to wildlife because of the low allocation and inclusion of design elements

## Draft Environmental Impact Statement

<b>Issues and Resources</b>	<b>Alternative A Effects</b>	<b>Alternative B Effects</b>	<b>Alternative C Effects</b>	<b>Alternative D Effects</b>
Effects on Subsistence Use	This project will not result in a significant possibility of a significant restriction on subsistence use of any subsistence resources because it will not affect abundance or distribution of any subsistence resource, nor will it change access to or competition for those resources.  Established modes of access (by foot, boat, vehicle, and ATV) would remain available under all the alternatives since this project does not close roads, trails, or eliminate docks or buoys.	This project will not result in a significant possibility of a significant restriction on subsistence use of any subsistence resources because it will not affect abundance or distribution of any subsistence resource, nor will it change access to or competition for those resources.  Established modes of access (by foot, boat, vehicle, and ATV) would remain available under all the alternatives since this project does not close roads, trails, or eliminate docks or buoys.	This project will not result in a significant possibility of a significant restriction on subsistence use of any subsistence resources because it will not affect abundance or distribution of any subsistence resource, nor will it change access to or competition for those resources.  Established modes of access (by foot, boat, vehicle, and ATV) would remain available under all the alternatives since this project does not close roads, trails, or eliminate docks or buoys.	This project will not result in a significant possibility of a significant restriction on subsistence use of any subsistence resources because it will not affect abundance or distribution of any subsistence resource, nor will it change access to or competition for those resources.  Established modes of access (by foot, boat, vehicle, and ATV) would remain available under all the alternatives since this project does not close roads, trails, or eliminate docks or buoys.
Effect to cultural and traditional uses	Commercial use of the “Duke Island area” may affect cultural and traditional uses of the area	An increase in the number of service days allocated to Outfitters and guides would allow additional commercial use of the “Duke Island area” which may affect cultural and traditional uses.	An increase in the number of service days allocated to Outfitters and guides would allow additional commercial use of the “Duke Island area” which may affect cultural and traditional uses.	Alternative D has the least potential for effects to cultural and traditional uses; it keeps the current status of management.

\* In Alternative 1, no use will be officially allocated to outfitters and guides. However, highest use numbers are shown here for comparison.

\*\* Use in this area has not been permitted since 1999. However, unplanned use occurred in one year by a guide who had formerly been permitted in the area and did not realize it was closed. That use was stopped upon discovery and has not occurred again.

(Source: Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guided Recreation project Chapter 3 and Resource Reports)

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# Chapter 1

## Purpose and Need



# CHAPTER 1, PURPOSE AND NEED

## Introduction

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The Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District (KMRD), U.S. Forest Service, has prepared this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other relevant federal and state laws and regulations, to analyze how to allocate visitor capacity on KMRD. The allocation will set use levels for outfitter and guide permits but will not set use levels for unguided visitors. Unguided visitors (those people visiting the Tongass National Forest without an outfitter or a guide) can continue to enjoy KMRD recreation and subsistence opportunities in the same way they do now. Guided users, in this EIS, are those people visiting the Tongass who use the services of an outfitter or a guide; as used throughout this EIS, guided use also includes use of an outfitter.

This EIS discloses the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts that would result from the proposed action and alternatives. The document is organized into four parts:

*Chapter 1 - Purpose and Need:* The section includes information on the purpose of and need for the project, and the agency's proposal for achieving that purpose and need. This section also details how the Forest Service informed the public of the proposal and public responses.

*Chapter 2 - Alternatives:* This section provides a more detailed description of the agency's proposed action and compares it to the no-action alternative (Alternative A) and alternatives to the proposed action. This discussion also includes project management measures. Finally, this section provides a summary table of the environmental consequences associated with the alternatives.

*Chapter 3 - Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences:* This section describes the existing conditions and the environmental effects of implementing the action alternatives and no action. This analysis is organized by resource area.

*Chapter 4 - Lists:* This section provides a list of document preparers and agencies consulted during the development of the environmental analysis, as well as, a list of references used to prepare this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

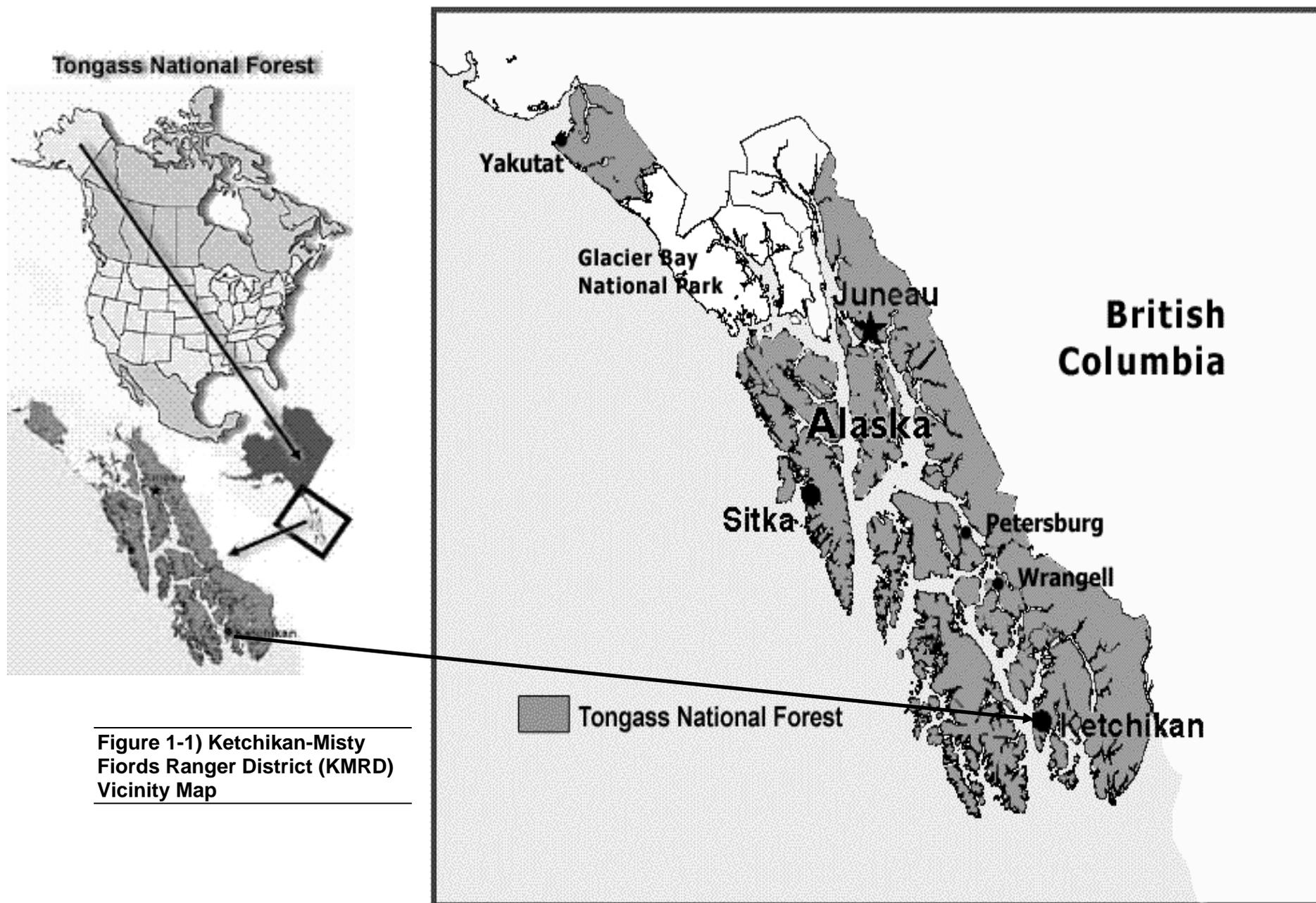
Additional documentation, including resource specific detailed descriptions of the project area and analyses of the project effects, may be found in the project planning record located at the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District Office in Ketchikan, Alaska.

## Project Area Description

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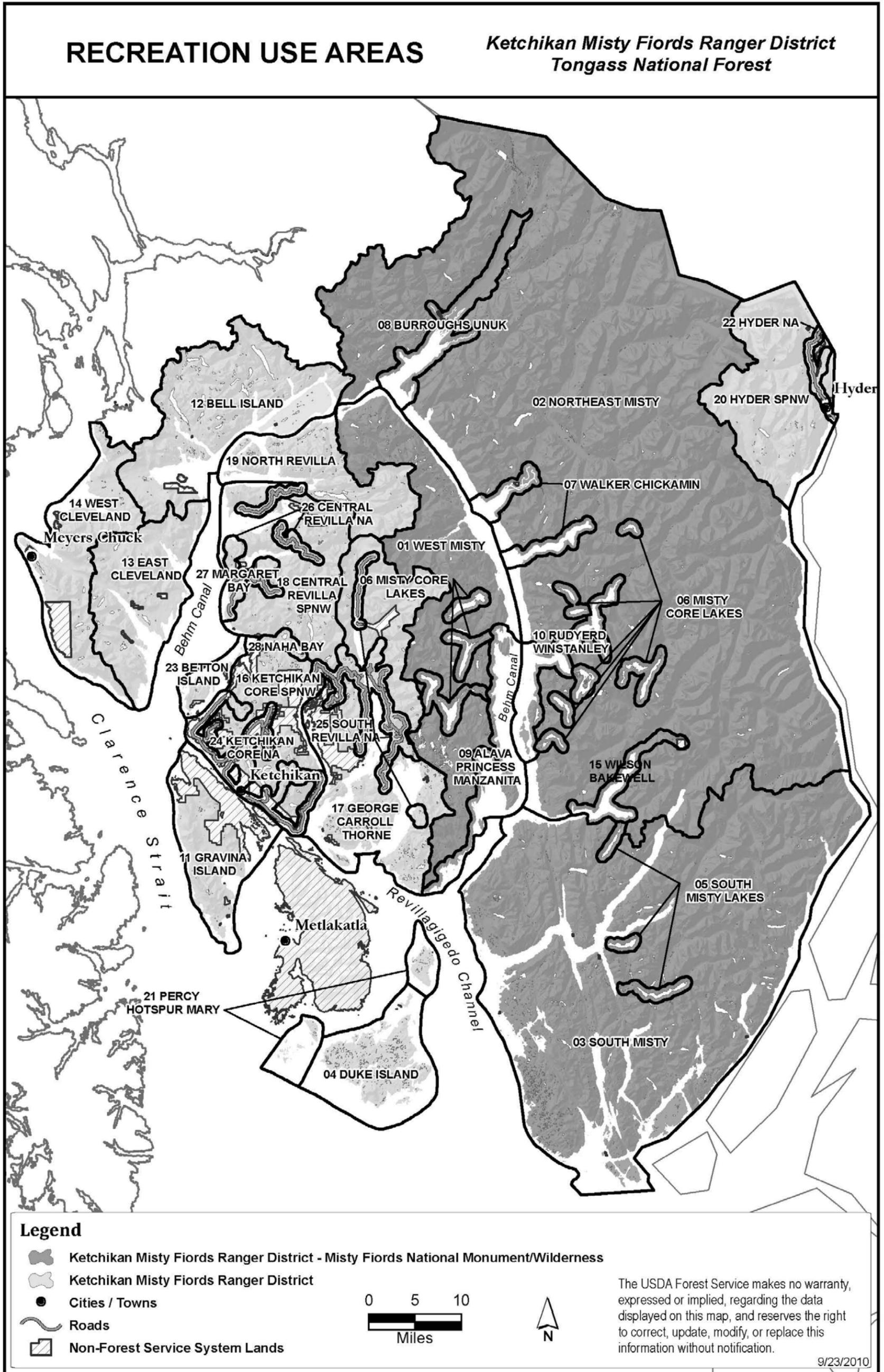
The project area consists of the National Forest System (NFS) lands encompassing the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District (KMRD) of the Tongass National Forest (Figure 1-1). The KMRD encompasses over 3.2 million acres of temperate rainforest, mountain peaks, glaciers, alpine tundra, muskegs, lakes, rivers, and streams. Approximately two-thirds of these acres are in Misty Fiords National Monument Wilderness. It encompasses the communities of Ketchikan, Hyder, Metlakatla, Meyers Chuck, Saxman, and Loring. A map displaying the project area is presented in Figure 1-2.

***Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan***



**Figure 1-1) Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District (KMRD) Vicinity Map**

Figure 1-2) Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan Project Area including Recreation Use Areas



Back of Figure 1-2

For the purpose of this project, KMRD is divided into 28 recreation use areas<sup>1</sup> (see Figure 1-2 and Table 2-1 in Chapter 2). Maps of each recreation use area are in Appendix B of this EIS.

## **Background**

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Visitor capacity, for this project, is the estimated number of users, both guided and unguided, that can be accommodated in a given area without a loss in the quality of the recreation experience.

In 2007, the Forest Supervisor determined a need existed for outfitter and guide services within Wilderness Areas on the Tongass. The amount, type and extent of services needed are determined by the District Ranger prior to issuing outfitter and guide permits in Wilderness Areas (Wilderness Act, FSH 2709.11 41.53e, USDA 2007).

In 2008, a Determination of Need for Commercial Uses on the KMRD (Appendix A, USDA Forest Service 2008a) was completed that demonstrated the need for commercially guided opportunities on the wilderness and non-wilderness portions of KMRD. The District Ranger determined there was a need for the following commercially-guided activities:

- brown bear, black bear, and mountain goat hunting,
- floatplane landing tours,
- freshwater fishing,
- remote setting nature tours (e.g. hiking, beach activities, sightseeing, wildlife viewing),
- wildlife viewing at developed sites,
- camping,
- road-based nature tours, and
- institutional use (e.g. youth and education groups).

Only these guided uses would be permitted through a decision on this analysis. Other types of uses would have to be considered on a case-by-case basis with a separate NEPA analysis.

In September 2008, the Forest Service revised our directives governing special use permits for outfitting and guiding conducted on NFS lands (Forest Service Handbook 2709.11 Chapter 40, Section 41.53). The handbook provides direction that clarified policy on issuing and administering temporary and priority use permits. The 2008 revisions did not affect the allocation of use but might change how use is distributed.

Before this NEPA process began, the KMRD conducted a public process to determine public perceptions, desires, and needs regarding outfitter and guide use on KMRD. This process was based on the Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) process described in the Public Involvement section of this chapter. KMRD wanted to provide an opportunity to residents and visitors, outfitters, guides, and other interested parties to be involved. The overall goal

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<sup>1</sup> Recreation use area boundaries were determined at public meetings in Ketchikan, AK. These use areas were used to analyze seasonal visitor capacities and will be used to administer recreation special use permits for the KMRD. The use areas only aid in analysis and administration and will not be permanently assigned through the Forest Plan or any other planning document.

## ***Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan***

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of the LAC process was to provide opportunities for enjoyment of NFS lands through guided and unguided use while minimizing conflicts and protecting forest resources. The LAC process resulted in and ended with development of the proposed action (summarized below and described fully in Chapter 2 of this EIS).

In 2009/2010, it was estimated that the total visitor capacity for Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District is approximately 148,000 service days annually (Visitor Capacity Analysis for KMRD, Appendix C of this EIS). This capacity number estimates how many people can annually use a given area during the spring, summer, and fall seasons, and was used in developing the proposed action and alternatives to the proposed action for this analysis (see Chapter 2 for alternatives). The visitor capacities are designed as the maximum amount of recreation use allowed in order to maintain the standards and guidelines identified during the LAC process, however, they are at a “reasonable use level” compared to Forest Plan standards and guidelines. For a detailed explanation of how the visitor capacity was generated, see the Visitor Capacity Analysis in Appendix C of this document. Due to very low outfitter and guide use in the winter, winter capacity was not determined and winter use by outfitters and guides will not be considered or allocated through this analysis and decision. Winter outfitter and guide use will be considered through other analyses on a case-by-case basis.

Through this National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords District Ranger will decide how much use will be allocated (or distributed) to outfitters and guides through special use permits. In allocating use, the District Ranger will consider uses that serve the public need for outfitter and guide services in ways that protect the natural and cultural resources of the area, and the more primitive social setting desired for an “Alaskan experience<sup>2</sup>”. The allocation will only set use levels for outfitter and guide permits. The action alternatives (Alternatives B, C, and D – described in Chapter 2 under “Alternative Descriptions”) allow for growth of outfitters and guides in most recreation use areas.

Unguided visitors can continue to enjoy KMRD recreation and subsistence opportunities as they do now. No known subsistence occurs via outfitters and guides, so changes to allocations should not affect access to subsistence resources. This project will not result in a significant possibility of a significant restriction on subsistence use of any subsistence resources because it will not affect abundance or distribution of any subsistence resource, nor will it change access to or competition for those resources.

The actions proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) respond to the goals and objectives outlined in the Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan, page 2-1<sup>3</sup>). The Forest Plan provides standards and guidelines for authorizing the services of qualified outfitters and guides to the public, where the need for the service has been

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<sup>2</sup> During the LAC process, the participants felt that most visitors came to Alaska to experience remote areas, with vast vistas, clean air, few encounters with others, and abundant wildlife and fish. They described this as the Alaskan experience. The Alaskan experience attributes could also be defined as ranging from the Primitive to Semi-primitive Motorized ROS Classes (USDA Forest Service 2008b, Appendix I, pages I-1 to I-3).

<sup>3</sup> A range of recreation opportunities is maintained on the Forest from primitive to more urban settings. Recreation opportunities will allow for a different type of experience in visual quality, access, remoteness, visitor management, on-site recreation development, social encounters, and visitor impacts.

identified and the use is compatible with the objectives and management direction of the affected Land Use Designation (LUD). The Forest Plan Forest-wide Standard and Guidelines for Recreation and Tourism state in part:

“Generally allocate no more than one-half the appropriate capacity of the LUD to outfitter/guide operations. For specific locations, consider different allocations based on historical use, changing demand, spatial zoning, or temporal zoning.” (USDA Forest Service 2008b, p. 4-46).

Congress passed a variety of laws that allow outfitting and guiding services on NFS lands. National policy allows the Forest Service to issue either temporary or priority special use permits to qualified outfitters and guides.

Temporary special use permits may be issued for minor, non-recurring outfitting and guiding activities in amounts of up to 200 service days in a 180-day period. They are not subject to renewal. They may be offered on a first-come, first-served or lottery basis and are issued only for intermittent or transient outfitting and guiding conducted on NFS lands (FSH 2709.11, Chapter 41.53j).

Priority special use permits may be issued for up to 10 years with a probationary 2-year permit term for new priority use permit holders that may be extended for up to 8 years based upon satisfactory performance (FSH 2709.11, Chapter 41.53l).

Priority use permit allocation is based on the highest amount of actual use in 1 calendar year during a 5-year period. Permit holders with 1,000 service days or less can acquire an additional 25 percent of their highest actual use year and permit holders with more than 1,000 service days can acquire an additional 15 percent, provided that the total does not exceed the allocation when the permit was issued (FSH 2709.11, Chapter 41.53m). This approach to reviewing use allocations takes into account market fluctuations, availability of state hunting licenses, and natural phenomena.

This NEPA process does not change the way outfitters and guides are permitted at any location, only sets allocation of visitor capacity in service days. It does not designate which permitted activities will take place or designate who will get outfitter and guide permits. The issuance of permits will continue to follow the variety of laws that allow outfitting and guiding services on NFS lands, as stated above. The permit administrators will continue to issue permits, approved by the District Ranger, in the same way they are currently issuing them.

## **Purpose and Need for Action** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Need**

Since there is a demonstrated need for commercial service(s) and these services are deemed appropriate (Appendix A), the Forest Service may issue Special Use Authorizations (SUAs) to individual(s) or organization(s) (USDA 2008b, p. 4-46) to provide the services. This project proposal also responds to Forest Service Manual and Handbook direction (FSM 2720 and FSH 2709.11), which allows for issuance of priority use permits after a needs assessment and visitor capacity analysis have been completed to identify the public or agency need for

## **Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan**

outfitting and guiding activities and assess the amount of use that may be conducted without detrimental social and environmental impacts. Multi-year priority use permits allow outfitters and guides to make financial commitments necessary to continue providing service to the public.

A District-wide outfitter and guide plan is needed because the current permitting process:

- Does not satisfy Forest Service direction for issuing long-term priority use permits,
- Does not provide the District Ranger with a District-wide strategy for reducing conflicts between guided and unguided visitors and ensuring a range of recreational opportunities are offered across KMRD,
- Does not allow the Forest Service to respond to special use permit applications in a timely manner because, without a comprehensive analysis, each application involves a separate analysis and scoping process consistent with the NEPA, and
- Does not fully address cumulative impacts of outfitter and guide use on forest resources, including wilderness character.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this project is to:

- Determine the amount of outfitter and guide use to allocate for each of the 28 recreation use areas on the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District,
- Satisfy Forest Service direction for issuance of long-term, priority use permits,
- Provide opportunities for guided use while minimizing resource impacts and conflicts between guided and unguided visitors,
- Provide standards and indicators for monitoring social conditions across KMRD,
- Develop an adaptive management strategy for adjusting guided use allocations based on monitoring information collected during the life of this plan,
- Improve the Forest Service's ability to process permits in a timely manner, and
- Address cumulative impacts of outfitter and guide use on forest resources, including wilderness character.

### **Summary of the Proposed Action** \_\_\_\_\_

The action proposed by the Forest Service to meet the purpose and need is to authorize outfitter and guide operations through the issuance of special use permits based on the Determination of Need for Commercial Uses on the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District (Appendix A of this EIS, USDA Forest Service 2008a), visitor capacity estimates, and guided use allocations for KMRD's 28 recreation use areas (Figure 1-2).

The proposed action would authorize the issuance of outfitter and guide permits for KMRD. Of the estimated annual visitor capacity of approximately 148,000 service days, the proposed action would allocate 53,997 service days annually for outfitter and guide use on the KMRD (5,126 service days in the spring, 44,416 service days in the summer, and 4,455 service days in the fall). The proposed action allocates 10 to 75 percent of the visitor capacity in 26 of the

recreation use areas to outfitters and guides during the summer season and 10 to 50 percent during the spring and fall seasons. Outfitting and guiding would not be allowed in two of the 28 recreation use areas.

Due to low actual and anticipated use by outfitters and guides in the winter season (October 21- April 19) no allocation of use in the winter is being proposed at this time. See Chapter 2, Elements Common to All Action Alternatives for a full description.

The Proposed Action is consistent with the Forest Plan direction for allocating outfitter and guide use. In the Proposed Action, allocations were considered by specific recreation use area. For example, some of the wilderness areas are remote and difficult to access and, therefore, receive very little unguided use. The predominant historical use in these areas is guided use; thus, to allow access to this difficult to reach area, the allocation to outfitters and guides was set higher (75%) in the Proposed Action.

All outfitter and guide operations will be subject to area-wide and site-specific management elements and mitigation measures to protect natural and historic resources and minimize crowding and conflicts between guided and unguided visitors. These management elements and mitigations are described in Chapter 2 and Appendix B.

For qualified applicants, the District Ranger may issue priority use and temporary use permits based on the guided use allocation.

The Proposed Action includes the ability to use adaptive management to maintain a range of quality recreation experiences across KMRD and a balance between guided and unguided use. Adaptive management may result in increased or decreased allocations or other adjustments for specific recreation use areas based on standards and the level of effects. See Chapter 2 for a complete description of the Proposed Action and further information on the adaptive management being proposed.

## **Decision Framework**

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The Ketchikan-Misty Fiords District Ranger is the responsible official for this proposal. The District Ranger will decide how to manage the outfitter and guide special use program based on the total estimated visitor capacity for commercial use. The District Ranger will consider protection of forest resources and balance the needs of guided and unguided visitors while maintaining a range of quality recreation experiences across KMRD. The District Ranger will also decide what activities will trigger additional review. The type of recreation use for any given recreation use area will not be established by this document.

Given the purpose and need, the District Ranger will review the proposed action and the other alternatives in order to make the following decisions:

- Determine whether or not to authorize outfitting and guiding within the 28 recreation use areas identified in this document and what types of guided uses would be allowed under this decision.
- The locations, limitations, management, and allocations for outfitter and guide permits and opportunities on the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District for the next five to ten years;

## **Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan**

- The extent, amount, and location of commercial use to allocate within the Misty Fiords National Monument Wilderness Area;
- How to manage guided use on the KMRD to minimize potential impacts to all resources;
- What, if any, management elements, mitigation measures and monitoring are needed; and
- What proposals will trigger further review by Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) members.
- The District Ranger will also decide whether and how to use adaptive management to potentially increase or decrease allocations or make other adjustments for specific recreation use areas.

The District Ranger will not address proposals for development<sup>4</sup> in this document. Development proposals, authorized under different Forest Service authorities and policies, are beyond the scope of this analysis.

Mitigation measures will be implemented through permit requirements and provisions, and administration and program monitoring. Monitoring will occur during the administration of special use permits and as part of the ongoing program of monitoring forest resources (sensitive and invasive plants, wilderness campsites, etc).

When guided use in specific recreation use areas approaches the allocated levels, requests for use may be redirected to other locations. If this measure is not sufficient to accommodate demand, resulting in a competitive interest, use will be allocated among qualified guides through a competitive process.

## **Public Involvement**

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The Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) process was used to develop the proposed action alternative. Public involvement in this project occurred during the LAC process and public involvement continues through this EIS.

A substantial amount of public involvement occurred prior to and during the LAC process. Prior to the LAC process, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) office were consulted as the Needs Assessment was being developed. As the LAC process got underway, nearly 200 people participated in one or more of the nine public meetings. Participants included individuals, outfitters and guides, agency representatives, tribal representatives, businesses, and Forest Service personnel. Additional phone calls and meetings were held with those interested in or concerned about particular aspects of the project or the LAC process, such as ADF&G, the ANILCA office, and State Representatives. In most cases, concerns were resolved through the development of the Proposed Action or they have been brought forward into the NEPA process and helped determine alternatives.

We are now in the NEPA process, which includes analysis of alternatives in a draft and final environmental impact statement (EIS). After the analysis, a record of decision (ROD) will be issued as described in the Decision Framework section above. The difference between the

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<sup>4</sup> *Development* would include construction of cabins, trails, campgrounds, tent platforms, resorts, or any other structure or facility.

processes is analysis and decision. Public involvement for both processes is summarized below. The LAC process and results are further described in Appendix E of this EIS.

## **Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC)**

Public participation for this project began in January 2009 with a public meeting at the Southeast Alaska Discovery Center in Ketchikan, Alaska. At the meeting, we introduced the proposed planning process, discussed project goals, and shared recreation use information.

Following the initial meeting, KMRD started a recreation planning process that followed the multi-step LAC planning process. This process involved the public and Forest Service managers with the intent to consider both recreation use and resource protection needs. Nine additional public meetings occurred that shared information and gathered comments from interested individuals. This process relied on a sustained relationship between the Forest Service and interested citizens. The meetings took place from January 2009 to April 2010. A website was developed and regularly updated to share information about the project and process and inform the public about meetings and meeting discussions. That website continues to be updated with information from this NEPA process:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/tongass/districts/ketchikan/recreationplanning.shtml>.

The goal of the process was to: 1) identify concerns; 2) develop desired future recreation conditions for 28 proposed recreation use areas; 3) identify standards and indicators that can be used to monitor those conditions; and 4) develop acceptable levels of guided use that can be accommodated without exceeding standards related to desired conditions.

The goals for the process were met (see Appendix E). During the public process, people:

- identified important recreation values and potential impacts to those values,
- developed four Recreation Opportunity Zones - Primitive Wilderness, Semi-Primitive Wilderness, Semi-Primitive Non-Wilderness, and Natural Accessible – based on resource, social, and management conditions, to ensure that the range of desired recreation conditions and opportunities that people want are provided (see Alternative Development Process Table 2-1 and Figure 2-1 in Chapter 2 of this EIS),
- discussed the indicators and standards that will be used to understand and monitor recreation use conditions (see Table 2-1, Chapter 2 of this EIS),
- commented on proposed allocations for guided use that were developed based on the above bullets, and
- identified management actions that could bring conditions up to standard if thresholds are approached or met.

The Proposed Action in this EIS was developed through the LAC process. The other alternatives were developed based on issues raised at the LAC or were brought forward by public comments during NEPA public involvement or by KMRD resource specialists.

## **NEPA Public Involvement**

**Federal Register/Federal Announcements:** For the environmental analysis part of this project, public participation began with publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) to complete

## **Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan**

an environmental impact statement in the Federal Register, September 27, 2010. This NOI briefly described the project, provided estimated timelines and contacts for the project, and started the comment period on the proposed action developed during the LAC process.

In addition to the NOI and the following specific activities, the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan project has been listed on the Tongass National Forest Schedule of Proposed Actions since July 2010; the Schedule of Proposed Actions is available on the Internet (<http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/tongass/projects/projects.shtml>).

**Public Mailing and Other Outreach:** On September 28 and 29, 2010, a scoping letter providing information and seeking public comment was mailed or emailed to 245 individuals and groups that had previously shown interest in Forest Service outfitter and guide projects in Ketchikan, Alaska. This included Federal and State agencies; Alaska Native groups like the Ketchikan Indian Community, Metlakatla Indian Community, Organized Village of Saxman, Tongass Tribe, and Cape Fox Corporation; municipal offices; businesses; interest groups; and individuals. Scoping letters were mailed to several additional individuals and groups after September 29. Sixteen responses to this mailing were received; the comments are filed in the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan project record.

Comments were used to determine issues, management alternatives, and to determine what information to discuss in the EIS or specialist reports and when to further explain policies or procedures. In addition, the project website developed during the collaborative process continues to be available with project information and updates:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/tongass/districts/ketchikan/recreationplanning.shtml>.

**Open Houses:** As discussed above, 10 collaborative meetings were held with the public to develop the Proposed Action. As NEPA analysis moved forward, an open house meeting was held in Ketchikan on October 26, 2010 to provide information to the public about the Proposed Action and to further discuss local concerns and interests. Fourteen members of the public attended; many attendees provided input (input is documented in the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan Project Record).

Further public meetings and subsistence hearings are expected to be scheduled in Ketchikan, Saxman, Hyder, and Metlakatla during the spring or summer of 2011.

**Local News Media:** A news article about the EIS project and announcing the open house was printed in the *Ketchikan Daily News* on October 23-24, 2010.

**Government-to-Government Consultation or Information Sharing:** The National Historic Preservation Act (1966 as amended) strengthens the relationship between the Forest Service and Indian Tribes (defined as federally recognized tribes, Alaska Native Corporations and Native Hawaiian Organizations) in consultation regarding site significance and the potential effects on historic and archaeological sites. Executive Orders 13084 and 13175 require that federal agencies consult with tribes during planning activities.

- June 15 and 17, 2010 - The Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District hand delivered or mailed letters describing the proposed action and offering the opportunity for government-to-government consultation to the Ketchikan Indian Community, Metlakatla Indian Community, Organized Village of Saxman, and Cape Fox Corporation.

- July 6, 2010 – District Ranger plus staff attended the Organized Village of Saxman Tribal Council Meeting to share information and discussed the Outfitter and Guide Management Plan EIS and the letter recently sent to the Tribal Government.
- July 8, 2010 and February 10, 2011 – District staff attended the Ketchikan Indian Community, “Our Way of Life” committee to discuss a variety of projects that included the Outfitter and Guide Management Plan EIS.
- August 3, 2010 and February 7, 2011 - District staff attended the Organized Village of Saxman Tribal Council Meeting to share information on a variety of projects that included the Outfitter and Guide Management Plan EIS.
- August 9, October 11, and November 8, 2010, January 13 and February 14, 2011 - District staff attended the Ketchikan Indian Community Tribal Council meeting to discuss a variety of projects that included the Outfitter and Guide Management Plan EIS.
- October 14, 2010 - The District Ranger and staff attended the Ketchikan Indian Community Tribal Council meeting to discuss a variety of projects that included the Outfitter and Guide Management Plan EIS; the upcoming Public Open House was emphasized.
- October 26, 2010 - District Ranger plus staff conducted a Public Open House about the Outfitter and Guide Management Plan EIS that was attended by representatives of the Ketchikan Indian Community and the Metlakatla Indian Community.
- November 2, 29, and 30, 2010 - The Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District delivered or mailed the quarterly information letters describing current District projects to Ketchikan Indian Community, Metlakatla Indian Community, and the Organized Village of Saxman.

The above meetings are generally considered information sharing opportunities. Only one Tribal Government has requested and been involved in official Government-to-Government consultation on this project to date:

- February 18, 2011 – The District Ranger and staff attended the Metlakatla Indian Community Tribal Council meeting and consulted on a variety of projects that included the Outfitter and Guide Management Plan EIS. The Tribe was particularly concerned about recreation use areas 04 Duke Island, 21 Percy Hotspur Mary, and 11 Gravina Island. The Tribe requested no outfitter and guide use in those areas. They also asked to have the analysis consider additional reduction or mitigation on aircraft in use area 08 Boroughs/Unuk.

The Ketchikan Indian Community, Metlakatla Indian Community, Organized Village of Saxman, Cape Fox Corporation, and Sealaska Corporation will be sent a copy of this DEIS.

**Meetings and Discussions with Agencies:** In November and December of 2010, the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District fisheries department discussed and obtained fisheries harvest data from ADF&G.

## **Issues**

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For the purposes of this analysis, issues identified during the public involvement process are categorized as either significant or non-significant. Significant issues are those directly or indirectly caused by implementing the proposed action and represent disputes, disagreements or debate about the effects of the proposed action. Significant issues were used to design alternatives.

Non-significant issues are those: 1) outside the scope (not related to the effects) of the proposed action; 2) already decided by law, regulation, Forest Plan, or other higher level decision; 3) irrelevant to the decision to be made; or 4) conjectural and not supported by scientific or factual evidence. The Council for Environmental Quality (CEQ) NEPA regulations require this delineation in Sec. 1501.7, "...identify and eliminate from detailed study the issues which are not significant or which have been covered by prior environmental review (Sec. 1506.3)..."

Sixteen responses to the September 2010 scoping mailing were received. KMRD also had internal scoping discussions. Issues were identified during the LAC process, through internal scoping, and during scoping.

## **Significant Issues**

Issues for the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District Outfitter and Guide Management Plan project were identified through public and internal scoping. Each comment received during scoping was considered a potential issue and each comment was evaluated to determine how to address the comment. Similar issues were combined into one statement where appropriate. The following five issues were determined to be significant and within the scope of the project decision. The IDT developed alternatives to the Proposed Action to address these issues; Chapter 2 of this DEIS discusses and compares the alternatives. Additional issues were considered but did not form the basis for an alternative; they are discussed separately below.

Units of measure were defined to identify how each alternative responds to a significant issue. Measures were chosen that were quantitative where possible; predictable; responsive to the issue; and linked to cause and effect relationships. These measures describe how the alternative affects the resource or resources central to the issue.

### **Issue 1:**

Limiting the amount and location of outfitter and guide use may not adequately provide for industry stability and growth.

#### **Measurements:**

- Number of service days allocated to outfitters and guides by recreation use area
- Number of service days allocated to outfitters and guides in 06 Misty Core Lakes, 11 Gravina Island, 17 George Carroll Thorne, and 27 Margaret Bay recreation use areas (these areas were identified during the LAC process by outfitters and guides as desirable Recreation Use Areas for guided opportunities).

**Issue 2:**

Outfitter and guide use may cause crowding, noise, and disturbance, particularly in locations popular with unguided users.

**Measurements:**

- Number of service days allocated to outfitters and guides by recreation use area
- Number of service days allocated during the summer to outfitters and guides in 04 Duke Island, 08 Burroughs Unuk, 11 Gravina Island, 12 Bell Island, 13 East Cleveland, 17 George Carroll Thorne, 23 Betton Island, 24 Ketchikan Core NA, 27 Margaret Bay, and 28 Naha Bay (areas identified by unguided users as locations of interest or concern)

**Issue 3:**

Allowing outfitter and guide use in 04 Duke and 21 Percy Hotspur Mary use areas may affect historic properties, sacred sites and traditional cultural properties.

**Measurement:**

- Number of service days allocated to outfitters and guides in 04 Duke and 21 Percy Hotspur Mary use areas

**Issue 4:**

Noise associated with floatplanes and boats in and around Misty Fiords National Monument Wilderness may negatively impact wilderness character.

**Measurement:**

- Number of service days allocated in Misty Fiords National Monument Wilderness
- Effects on opportunities for solitude due to noise

**Issue 5:**

Outfitter and guide use may negatively affect wildlife, subsistence uses, and cultural and traditional uses.

**Measurement:**

- Number of service days allocated to outfitters and guides

**Other Issues and Concerns**

Each comment received during scoping was considered a potential issue. Some concerns and suggestions brought up by the public were considered but determined not to be alternative-driving issues. Some of these issues are already addressed through other processes or through protection provided by Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines (see Elements Common to All Action Alternatives in Chapter 2 and Appendix B), or their resolution is beyond the scope of this project. Where possible, suggestions about the Ketchikan-Misty

## ***Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan***

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Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan project were incorporated into the design of the Proposed Action and alternatives (see Chapter 2 of this DEIS). Additionally, some concerns and suggestions for the analysis were considered but eliminated from detailed analysis for the reasons discussed in Chapter 2 of this DEIS (Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Detailed Analysis).

The following issues were considered but determined not to be alternative-driving issues. The rationale for why these issues were determined to be non-significant is included below. As needed, resource effects related to these concerns are discussed in Chapter 3.

**Issue: Outfitters and guides are concerned that the allocations do not allow for them to respond to a sudden demand for large-scale activity. Businesses want to be able to respond to arising opportunities quickly – there is a desire to allow for flexibility and adaptive management.**

- The alternatives respond to this concern at different levels by allocating a range of guided capacity. All of the action alternatives allocate more visitor days to guided uses on the entire District than the highest average annual use shown in Alternative A, the no action alternative. This allows for business growth in most recreation use areas. If an action alternative is selected in the decision on this project, when outfitters and guides request increased use, permit administrators will be able to respond more quickly to requests because service days for the uses covered in this EIS will be available for permitting. If adaptive management is selected in the decision, there will be additional opportunities for the District Ranger to manage outfitting and guiding with flexibility. However, the time it takes for the District and District Ranger to respond may be affected if there a multiple requests or staffing levels are low.

**Issue: Unguided users want to retain facilities and access to recreational experiences and were concerned about future limitations/regulations**

- A decision on this project would not change facilities or access to recreational experiences; it is the same for all alternatives. Unguided users will still be able to access the Tongass National Forest now and into the future. Nothing in this process establishes regulations.
- This analysis recognizes that an increase in guided visitors may indirectly affect unguided visitors. Chapter 3 analyzes these effects, which could include displacement (the unguided visitor moves to a different site) and crowding. Although this concern did not drive an alternative, it is considered in the EIS through the analysis of a range of alternatives and the analysis of the effects within that range.

**Issue: People are concerned about crowding from guided use near cabin sites and buoys (e.g. Fish Creek and Winstanley Island Cabin).**

- The IDT felt that Issue 2 and the mitigation measures specified within the recreation use area cards addressed this concern. Management elements on individual recreation use cards specify avoidance by or allowance of outfitter and guide cabin use and if buoys are available to outfitters and guides (ex. 17 George Carroll Thorne). Some cabins will be available for guided use; similar to unguided use, outfitters and guides must reserve cabins ahead of time so there should be no conflict with other users (Tables 1-1 and 1-2). Although this issue did not drive the development of Alternative D, it does respond to this concern.

**Issue: Outfitters and guides would like to see the process for reviewing permit applications streamlined in hopes of receiving a permit quicker.**

- By establishing a visitor capacity, identifying site-specific resource concerns, and completing this NEPA document, the permit administrators will be able to more quickly respond to requests for new permits and increased use for current permits; a decision on this NEPA will also allow for the issuance of priority use permits. When this NEPA process is complete, KMRDs ability to process requests for permits should be faster.

**Issue: People feel that it is important that people know what to expect regarding social conditions when they visit – the Forest Service should improve education and information available about different opportunities on KMRD.**

- Increased education regarding the social conditions is not a concern that can drive an alternative because it is not site-specific and does not have specific actions for any recreation use area. However, the Forest Service will try to improve efforts to educate visitors about the types of recreational opportunities and experiences available across KMRD through articles and interaction with the public. Additionally, education is one of the options that may be used in adaptive management.

**Issue: Outfitters and guides requested that allocation be distributed in various ways such as allocating to businesses that are already using an area or specify a certain amount of the allocation go to small businesses.**

- The distribution of allocation is not part of this decision and is outside the scope of this decision. The distribution of allocated days is determined during permit administration. In the case of conflict (where there is more interest for days than are allocated), that decision is made through a prospectus.

**Issue: The Forest Service is not developing any indicators and standards related to the physical resources (fisheries, water quality, etc.).**

- Standards and guidelines are set at the Forest Planning level in the 2008 Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). The IDT is using the Forest Plan standards and guidelines to determine effects to and management of physical resources. Through adaptive management, resource specialists can respond to changes in physical conditions to protect areas with resource concerns. Areas with known resource concerns can be found in Appendix B on the recreation use area cards. These areas are the same for all alternatives.

## ***Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan***

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**Issue: Bear hunters would like to see the summer season ending date changed to September 15.**

- This analysis used the dates established in the capacity analysis because the majority of outfitters and guides have seasons that end around September 30. Also, it is difficult to determine which hunt dates to use if we base it on hunting. Primary use of outfitters and guides is by cruise ship passengers, so that is basis of the seasons.

**Issue: Establishing capacities and allocations will increase competition and cause the entire District to be managed for commercial use.**

- In general, the action alternatives allocate more visitor days than the highest average annual use shown in Alternative A, the no action alternative, which will allow for growth in most areas. If an alternative is selected that increases competition at a specific location, permit administrators will work to resolve those conflicts. This may include suggesting the person applying use another location where capacity exists that would work for the activity, denying their request for use if there is no capacity, or issuing a prospectus to determine who gets the permits.
- The action alternatives include the ability to use adaptive management to maintain a range of quality recreation experiences across the District and a balance between guided and unguided use. Adaptive management may result in increased or decreased allocations for specific recreation use areas based on standards and the level of effects. All outfitter and guide operations will be subject to area-wide and site-specific mitigation measures to protect natural and historic resources and minimize crowding and conflicts between guided and unguided visitors.

**Issue: Outfitter and guide use will affect wildlife and fish population numbers.**

- ADF&G and the Federal Subsistence Board are the managers of population numbers and licenses; the Forest Service manages habitat and social aspects of recreation. Nonetheless, the effects to fish and wildlife are included in Chapter 3 of this EIS, and effects to wildlife were considered to be part of an issue (Issue 5) and a driver for Alternative D.

The following concerns were not considered to be significant issues because the concern is outside the scope of this decision.

**Issue: Recreation Opportunity Zones and indicators and standards established through the LAC process will result in future restrictions on motorized boat access for guided and unguided visitors.**

- The Forest Plan established the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) classes for the management of the Tongass National Forest (USDA 2008b, Forest Plan Appendix I). This EIS does not change recreation management established in the Forest Plan. The Recreation Opportunity Zones and indicators and standards established by the LAC process made it easier for the group to say how they felt outfitter and guide use should be managed in specific areas and did not add restrictions to unguided users (Appendix C of this document). Nothing in the decision will restrict how people access recreation areas; this analysis only sets allocations for the amount of outfitter and guide use that can occur.

**Issue: Certain activities will be given preference over others in areas like 04 Misty Core (floatplane landing tours versus hikers seeking solitude in the wilderness);**

- Allocation in this EIS is for all guided visitor days and does not determine what use will be permitted where, but how much use is allowed. Everyone would have the same opportunity to request the use.
- During the LAC process the public stated that a recreation emphasis may be desirable in some areas or locations, for example the current flightseeing use is high in recreation use area 04 Misty Core Lakes. The public suggested this because by concentrating flightseeing use in one location, other locations are then available for other activities like hikers seeking solitude in the wilderness, which may be in conflict with flightseeing. Even though a goal of outfitter and guide management is to provide different types of opportunities while minimizing inter-party conflict to the extent possible, the decision on what activities will occur in which areas will not be made in this document.
- The decisions on what to do where will be based on requests from outfitters and guides, Forest Plan standards and guidelines, resource concerns, outfitter and guide allocations in the record of decision, and, ultimately, site-specific decisions by the District Ranger. This method provides more flexibility and adaptability to the District Ranger at the time of permitting. Who goes where is outside the scope of this document.

**Issue: There will be impacts from activities outside Forest Service jurisdiction – airplane traffic in particular.**

- We have no control over activities or areas outside Forest Service jurisdiction, however the displacement concern was considered in Alternatives B, C, and D, and the effects are discussed in Chapter 3 of this EIS.

**Issue: This process will affect Forest Service response to people interested in applying for State permits for tidelands use.**

- Tidelands permitting is outside the scope of this project and would be based on State of Alaska policy.

**Issue: The majority of people that visit Misty were not present at the planning meetings and have not had a voice in the planning process.**

- The original public meetings developed one alternative, the NEPA process is designed to give people a voice in planning process. Additional alternatives may be developed for the FEIS based on comments on the DEIS, which gives everyone the right to be heard and their concerns considered.

## **Other Agency Permits, Licenses, and Certifications**

The Forest Service is not required to obtain permits or licenses to implement this project. However, outfitter and guide permit holders are responsible for obtaining necessary permits and licenses from federal and state agencies prior to commencing outfitting and guiding. Prior to guiding on NFS lands, the Federal Government may require verification of current business or operating licenses such as Coast Guard License, State of Alaska Sport Fishing License, etc. Outfitter and guide activities involving the taking of fish or game will be

## **Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan**

implemented under Alaska Board of Game, Alaska Board of Fisheries, and Federal Subsistence Board regulations.

Prior to guiding on NFS lands, State requirements include:

- that commercial guides are state licensed with the Big Game Commercial Services Board ([www.commerce.state.ak.us/occ/pgui3.htm](http://www.commerce.state.ak.us/occ/pgui3.htm)), regardless of where they are operating;
- any operator that uses state lands in the course of their commercial activities must either register with the Alaska Department of Natural Resource, Division of Mining, Land and Water (DMLW) under 11 AAAC 96.018, or obtain a permit under AS 38.05.850 or lease under AS 38.05.070. More information on commercial day-use registration and DMLW authorizations may be found at [http://www.dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/permit\\_lease/index.cfm](http://www.dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/permit_lease/index.cfm); and
- the operator must also comply with guide regulations issued by the Alaska Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development which address operations primarily occurring on state tidelands and related incidental activities occurring on federal uplands. Regulation details can be found at <http://www.dced.state.ak.us/occ/pgui5.htm>.

## **Planning Record**

Additional documentation, including more detailed analyses of project area resources, may be found in the project planning record located at the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District Office in Ketchikan, Alaska. Other reference documents such as the Forest Plan are available at the Supervisor's Office in Ketchikan, Alaska. The Forest Plan is also available on the Internet and CD-ROM.

## **Other Related Efforts**

The following past decisions relate to guided use on the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District. A statement in bold at the end of each effort explains the relationship between the prior effort and the current analysis.

Existing guided uses have been considered, generally under categorical exclusion with or without documentation of the decision. **The Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan decision would supersede these past decisions.**

Commercial Uses on Ketchikan Trails Environmental Assessment (EA): A July 1, 2005 Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact (DN/FONSI) for this analysis authorized guided use of three trails (Lunch Creek, Connell Lake, and Ward Creek Trails). The decision included restrictions on dates, hours of operation, maximum number of clients per group, and number of clients per day. Motorized use of trails, guided camping or biking, and guided floatplane landings on trail-accessible lakes were also not permitted. The decision also considered guided use on Deer Mountain, Dude Mountain, Frog Pond, Perseverance Lake, Pipeline, Minerva Mountain, Salvage Road, Silvis Lakes, and Ward Lake trails, but determined that no guided use would be permitted on these trails. **A decision on the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management**

**Plan would incorporate this EA, FONSI, and DN, and continue to implement this 2005 decision.**

Non-consumptive Commercial Guiding in the Naha Recreation Area: This EA considered whether to allow guiding for non-consumptive uses (such as hiking, photography, kayaking, camping, and sightseeing) within the Naha Recreation Area. The analysis area encompassed the entire Naha River drainage. The April 9, 1997 decision was to leave the area closed to commercial use because of overwhelming response from the public that outfitter and guide use would compromise the experience of current users of the area. The decision stated that the moratorium on guided use for the Naha Recreation Area would remain in place until such time that another NEPA decision modified that decision. **A decision on the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan would supersede this 1997 decision, though two of the alternatives analyzed (B and D) essentially propose to continue the closure.**

Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Cabin Use: The Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District determined that guided use at some cabins would be allowed.

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**Table 1- 1) Non-Wilderness cabins and maximum amount of use currently available for outfitter and guide use**

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Anchor Pass	10 days/month; no weekends/holidays
Blind Pass	10 days/month; no weekends/holidays
Helm Bay	20 days/month; Sept. 15 – May 1 only
Helm Creek	20 days/month; Sept. 15 – May 1 only
Phocena Bay	10 days/month; no weekends/holidays
Plenty Cutthroat	20 days/month
Reflection Lake	10 days/month; no weekends/holidays

A needs assessment was completed in 2008 that shows a need for guided camping within the Wilderness. This allows KMRD to designate cabins for outfitter and guide use.

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**Table 1- 2) Wilderness cabins designated for outfitter and guide use**

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Alava Bay	10 days/month; no weekends/holidays
Checats	20 days/month
Ella Narrows	10 days/month; no weekends/holidays
Hugh Smith Lake	20 days/month
Humpback Lake	10 days/month; no weekends/holidays
Wilson Narrows	20 days/month
Winstanley Lake	20 days/month

**A decision on the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan would incorporate this allocation and continue to implement this assessment.**

## **Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan**

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Revision to the EA for the Determination of Issuing Special Use Permits for Sportfishing Outfitter and Guide Services Throughout the Ketchikan Area, Tongass National Forest: In March 1998, a Decision Notice was signed by the Craig, Thorne Bay, and Ketchikan-Misty Fiords District Rangers to limit commercial guiding on streams with moderate concern for steelhead from December 1 – May 31. **A decision on the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan would supersede this 1998 decision for KMRD.**

Margaret Creek Wildlife Site: A prospectus was done for use of the Margaret bear viewing platform. **A decision on the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan would change the use in Margaret Creek area. Thus, depending on the alternative, another prospectus may be necessary.**

Fish Creek Wildlife Viewing Site: Hyder Bear Viewing Platform has recently been allocated at 50% of the people-at-one-time capacity based on the design of the bear viewing platform. **A decision on the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan would incorporate this allocation and continue to implement this decision.**

Access and Travel Management Plan: A decision was made in 2010 about what roads would remain open and those that would be closed through the public process for the access and travel management plan for KMRD. The subsequent annual version of the KMRD Motor Vehicle Use Map is used to display and implement that decision. Outfitters and guides may use open roads and open trails (if it is on their permit), but we are not changing the status on any roads and therefore not changing access opportunities for subsistence, unguided, or guided visitors. **A decision on the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Outfitter and Guide Management Plan would continue to implement this access and travel management decision.**