

# Shoreline II Outfitter/Guide Draft Environmental Statement

## Frequently Asked Questions

February 2016

### **Q: How do I find what I'm looking for on the project web page and in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)?**

**A:** On the project web page (<http://go.usa.gov/Pzi>) the DEIS can be found under the heading "Analysis". Under that heading you will then see Volume I, which contains the Summary, and Chapters 1 through 4 of the DEIS. The DEIS appendices (A-F) are then listed below with each appendix posted as its own file. The hardcopy DEIS contains Volume I (Summary, Chapters 1 through 4), and Volume II (Appendices A-F). The public website does not have a Volume II posted due to the large file size of the appendices when consolidated. Below is a guide to navigating each section of the DEIS:

- *Summary:* Found at the very beginning of Volume I of the DEIS, it contains a summarized/consolidated version of Chapters 1 and 2.
- *Chapter 1. Purpose and Need for Action:* This chapter includes information on the background of the project, the purpose and need, and the proposed action. This section also details public involvement opportunities, and what issues were derived from public input.
- *Chapter 2. Alternatives, Including the Proposed Action:* This chapter provides a more detailed description of the proposed action and the alternatives being considered. It also provides summary tables of proposed activities and a comparative summary of the environmental consequences associated with each alternative.
- *Chapter 3. Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences:* This chapter describes the environmental effects to each resource of implementing the alternatives described in Chapter 2.
- *Chapter 4. List of Preparers, Distribution, Glossary, References, Index:* This chapter provides a list of preparers, the distribution list for the DEIS, a glossary, and references used in DEIS development. The last section of this chapter is an index.
- *Appendices:* The appendices provide more detailed information to support the analyses presented in the DEIS.
- *Appendix A, Use Area Cards, and Appendix B, Large Group Areas:* These appendices provide site specific information, maps, and resource considerations for outfitter/guide management.
- *Appendix C. Mitigation:* Most resource concerns are mitigated through measures listed in Appendix C, which apply to outfitter/guide use across the analysis area.
- *Appendix D. Adaptive Management Strategy:* This appendix describes the Adaptive Management Strategy in full, including monitoring and implementation specifics.
- *Appendix E. Visitor Capacity Analysis:* This Appendix contains the document that updates the 2001 visitor capacity analysis developed for the one-half mile shoreline zone of Juneau, Hoonah, and Sitka Ranger Districts and Admiralty National Monument. It is a background document to the DEIS and provides rationale used to guide decision-making for allocating outfitter/guide use.

- *Appendix F. Wilderness Needs Assessment:* This appendix includes wilderness commercial needs assessments for recreation commercial services in each of the wilderness areas in the Shoreline II DEIS project area.

**Q: How do I interpret the use cards in Appendix A?**

<b>Use Area 01-04C, Taku Inlet</b>				
<b>Juneau Ranger District</b>				
<b>Estimated Visitor Capacity (Service Days) for ALL Users</b>				
<b>Winter (Jan. 1 – March 14)</b>	<b>Early Spring (March 15 – March 24)</b>	<b>Late Spring (March 25 – May 31)</b>	<b>Summer (June 1 – Sept. 14)</b>	<b>Fall (Sept. 15 – Dec. 31)</b>
2,336	1,778	1,576	11,533	3,456
<b>Description</b>				
This use area includes Pt. Bishop, the Taku River to the Canadian border and south of Taku Inlet to north of Slocum Inlet on the east side of Stephens Passage. The Taku River is a heavily used flightseeing corridor, and receives significant commercial and recreational fishing and pleasure craft use as well. The Taku River is of cultural significance. The river has tidal influences for miles upriver, which limit navigation, and is subject to annual outburst flooding from glacier dams upstream.				
<b>LUDs</b>				
Old-Growth Habitat, Remote Recreation, Semi-Remote Recreation, Scenic Viewshed, and Transportation and Utility System				
<b>ROS Existing Condition</b>				
Primitive, Roaded Natural, Semi-Primitive Motorized, and Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized				
<b>National Forest Shoreline II Project</b>				
<b>Miles</b>		<b>Acres</b>		
95		123,842		
<b>Communities</b>				
An enclave of homes near the Canadian border.				
<b>Forest Service Facilities</b>				
<i>Public Recreation Cabins:</i> Taku Glacier Cabin; West and East Turner Lake Cabins. <i>Trails:</i> Pt. Bishop				
<b>Non-National Forest System Lands</b>				
Annex Creek hydroelectric plant and penstock are situated on the north Taku Inlet shoreline about 3 ½ miles upriver from Stephens passage. On the south shore about six miles upriver, privately-owned Taku Lodge operates during the summer. Additionally, there is an area of homes and property near the Canadian border. Private recreation cabins are located near Twin Glacier Lake, Yehring Creek, and other locations within Taku inlet. Lake Dorothy hydroelectric plant and penstock and Bart Lake Dam are situated on the south Taku Inlet shoreline near the river mouth.				
<b>Recreation Use</b>				
<b>Area Attractions</b>	Scenic views, glaciers, and river-based recreation.			
<b>Outfitter/Guide Use</b>	Outfitter/guide activities in Taku Inlet include camping, kayak touring, sightseeing and beginning in 2015, hovercraft trips to Taku Glacier. Three outfitter/outfitters/guides have used this area between 2010 and 2014. An institutional operator has conducted guided overnight kayaking trips annually, and another has conducted day hikes.			
<b>Unoutfitted/Unguided Use</b>	These activities include fishing, day boating, hiking, and hunting for goat, moose, and bear. Most activities on lands are water-based.			
<b>Use Patterns</b>	This area includes a heavily used helicopter landing tour route to the Taku and Norris Glaciers. There is also a high volume of floatplane traffic to sightsee and to access the privately-owned Taku Lodge.			
<b>Primary Use Areas</b>	Though the waterway receives considerable use, few shoreline activities occur down river due to inaccessible shoreline and the vagaries of river bars. Boat traffic at river outlet mostly commercial fishing; boat traffic upriver mostly bound for enclave of private homes/property near Canadian border.			
<b>Large Group Areas</b>	Sunny Cove			

These numbers represent an estimate of the total number of recreation users (individual persons; guided and unguided) that can be accommodated on National Forest System lands in this use area for each season.

This is NOT the amount proposed for outfitter/guide use (see Alternative Comparisons, next page).

This is general descriptive information about the use area.

This section provides information about recreation uses occurring within the use area.

Management and Resource Considerations					
<b>Subsistence</b>	An annual average of 121 personal use fishing permits has been returned for use on the Taku River.				
<b>Wildlife</b>	NMFS has identified one Steller sea lion haul-out and five harbor seal haul-outs; 86 bald eagle nests have been mapped. Four historic goshawk nests have been documented in this use area. Two seabird nesting colonies have been documented in this use area. The waters of Stephens Passage at the mouth of Taku Inlet are part of the Stephens Passage Important Bird Area.				
<b>Fisheries</b>	Thirty-four Class I streams have been mapped in this area and five were identified with high fishing values. Though outside the analysis area, the Taku River system is a large transboundary river that supports stocks of all five Pacific salmon species, Dolly Varden char and cutthroat trout. The system is important to Alaskan and Canadian commercial, sport, and subsistence fisheries. Juneau residents use the lower Taku River and its tributaries for recreational sport fishing.				
<b>Botany/Invasives</b>	A population of a rare plant species, pipsissewa ( <i>Chimaphila umbellata</i> ), occurs in this use area. No priority invasive species are recorded in this use area.				
<b>Cultural/Heritage</b>	Twenty-seven historic sites were identified.				
<b>Recreation</b>	Developed recreation resources, such as cabins, have high potential for conflict with local users.				
<b>Wilderness</b>	None				
Alternative Comparisons					
Service days allocated to outfitter/guide use (outfitters /guides)					
*The No Action alternative does not reflect any service days for the early spring and winter seasons. They were not part of the 2004 Shoreline ROD.					
	Early Spring	Late Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter*
<b>Alternative 1 No Action</b>	--	240	916	150	--
<b>Alternative 2 Proposed Action</b>	125	110	810	170	165
<b>Alternative 3</b>	95	85	610	130	165
<b>Alternative 4</b>	205	180	1315	285	270
Design Features and Mitigation					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outfitter/guide use of West Turner Glacier Cabin is prohibited.</li> <li>• East Turner Lake and Taku Glacier Cabins are available for outfitter/guide use on a case-by-case basis.</li> <li>• All outfitter/guide activities are prohibited at Turner Creek (from the lake outlet to saltwater) on weekends and holidays* year round.</li> <li>• A Forest Service botanist/ecologist should be consulted before permitting use in this area.</li> </ul>					
*Weekends are defined as Saturday and Sunday. Holidays are defined as those days recognized by the U.S. government as a federal holiday and the State of Alaska as a state holiday.					

This section includes resource specific information that should be considered when determining outfitter/guide allocations.

These numbers represent the amount of outfitter/guide use (in service days) that is proposed under each alternative. This is a portion of the Visitor Capacities, shown above.

These are site-specific stipulations that would be applied to outfitter/guide permits. These address management issues identified in resource reports that relate to outfitter guide use.

**Q: Where can I find a summary of Shoreline II project effects on non-local and regional socioeconomic conditions?**

**A:** Shoreline II DEIS Volume I pp. 3-61 to 3-72 detail Shoreline II project effects on socioeconomic conditions with particular focus on commercial and non-commercial users.

**Q: Did the agency consider NOT offering an outfitter/guide allocation in certain locations within the Shoreline II project area?**

**A:** There are a number of design features/mitigations proposed that would place limitations or prohibitions on outfitter/guide use at specific locations throughout the project area. These can be found in Appendix A, Use Area Cards – look at the bottom of each use card in the Design Features and Mitigation section. For example, use card 01-04C Taku Inlet proposes the following:

- All outfitter/guide activities are prohibited at Turner Creek (from the lake outlet to saltwater) on weekends and holidays\* year round.

\*Weekends are defined as Saturday and Sunday. Holidays are defined as those days recognized by the U.S. government as a federal holiday and the State of Alaska as a state holiday.

**Q: What is the current number of service days allocated under the original Shoreline EIS?**

**A:** Look at the “No Action” alternative, Shoreline II DEIS Volume I, Chapter 2, p. 22, to see what the original decision provided for outfitter/guide allocation. Please note, not all of the outfitter/guide service days that are presently available have been authorized to outfitter/guide permits.

**Q: What is the difference between Shoreline and Shoreline II?**

**A:** Shoreline II covers the entire year, whereas Shoreline excluded the winter season. Since Shoreline was implemented in 2004, demand for certain locations has increased (and diversified); for other locations, demand remains largely unchanged. Shoreline dealt in “group days” which were difficult to explain/understand and manage. Shoreline II deals in “service days” which are the units of measure used in special use permits issued to outfitters and guides.

**Q: Is the project area different in Shoreline II?**

**A:** The project area has changed some. Shoreline was a standard use area of ½ mile inland from shore. Shoreline II has expanded that area in places to account for walk-in access (i.e., up salmon streams and to some peaks or other attractions where hikes or hunts deviate from shore – all foot travel, non-motorized). See Shoreline II DEIS Volume I, Chapter 1, pp. 1-3 for more information on the project area.

**Q: How did you come up with these alternatives (there are way too many/not enough service days offered)?**

**A:** The comment period is open now for anyone with concerns, suggestions or ideas. We invite you to provide comment. We provide a wide range of alternatives because we generally get feedback from forest stakeholders for offering *too little* and for offering *too much*. This is your opportunity to comment on the alternative that serves your interest.

For a description of the issues brought forward by the public that were considered in the development of the alternatives see Shoreline II DEIS Volume I, Chapter 1, pp. 1-13 to 1-17. For a full description of alternatives being considered in detail and a comparison of alternatives see Chapter 2, pp. 2-22 to 2-58.

**Q: Are you proposing to change the *Big Game Management Plan* (implemented in 2000) as part of the Shoreline II project?**

A: No. But we are trying to ensure alignment between the Shoreline II project and the Big Game Management Plan, which continues to be in effect. The goal is to integrate the Big Game Management Plan (as it stands) into the Shoreline II analysis and decision, so the two are implemented consistently.

**Q: Where can I find a map, list, and description of wilderness areas affected by Shoreline II?**

A: Shoreline II DEIS Volume I, Chapter 3, pp. 3-74 and 3-75 contain a map of the six affected wilderness areas and a table of their names, sizes, administering districts, and years of designation. Pp. 3-78 to 3-81 contain descriptions of the wilderness areas.

**Q: Where can I find a summary of current wilderness character conditions?**

A: Shoreline II DEIS Volume I pp. 3-82 to 3-90 details the existing wilderness character conditions for the affected wilderness areas.

**Q: Where can I find a summary of Shoreline II project effects on the wilderness areas?**

A: Shoreline II DEIS Volume I pp. 3-90 to 3-99 details Shoreline II project effects on wilderness character for the affected wilderness areas.

**Q: Where can I find wilderness commercial needs assessments for wilderness areas affected by Shoreline II?**

A: Shoreline II DEIS Volume I pp. 3-81 to 3-82 contain a summary of the findings of the wilderness commercial needs assessments for the six wilderness areas affected by the Shoreline II project. Appendix F of the Shoreline II DEIS contains the complete wilderness commercial needs assessments for the wilderness areas affected by Shoreline II. Note that the adjoining Tracy Arm – Ford’s Terror and Chuck River wilderness areas have a single wilderness commercial needs assessment for the two areas.

**Q: How can I provide comment on the Shoreline II DEIS, and can I only comment during the 45-day comment period?**

A: Comments on this project will be accepted at any time, but this project is subject to the objection process pursuant to 36 CFR § 218, which means individuals or entities who submit timely and specific written comments (as defined by 36 CFR §218.2) about the DEIS during this or other public comment periods (established by the responsible official) will be eligible to file an objection to this project when the draft Record of Decision is released.

Comments on this DEIS will be accepted for 45 days beginning on the first day after the date of publication of the Notice of Availability (NOA) of the DEIS in the Federal Register. The publication date of the NOA, was January 29<sup>th</sup>, and is the exclusive means for calculating the comment period for a proposed action documented in a DEIS. The NOA indicated that the comment period for the DEIS ends March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016. The NOA can be found on the project web page under the heading of “Supporting”.

For a more complete outline of objection regulations, specifics related to commenting on this DEIS, see the 'Dear Planning Participant' letter located at the beginning of Volume I of the DEIS.