

STATE OF ALASKA
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION



SOUTHEAST AREA

**PRELIMINARY BEST INTEREST FINDING AND DRAFT-
FOREST LAND USE PLAN FOR
KOSCIUSKO EAST TIMBER SALE
SSE-1384-K**

December 2023

Abbreviations

ADEC	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
ADF&G	Alaska Department of Fish and Game
ADNR	Alaska Department of Natural Resources
BIF	Best interest finding
DMLW	Division of Mining, Land and Water
DOF	Division of Forestry and Fire Protection
FLUP	Forest Land Use Plan
FRPA	Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act
FYSTS	Five-year Schedule of Timber Sales
MBF	Thousand board feet
POG	Productive old growth
POW	Prince of Wales (Island)
POWIAP	Prince of Wales Island Area Plan
ROW	Right-of-way
SESF	Southeast State Forest
SESFMP	Southeast State Forest Management Plan
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
UA	University of Alaska
USFS	United States Forest Service

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I. PROPOSED ACTION

The Division of Forestry and Fire Protection (DOF) is proposing to offer for sale approximately 186 acres of old-growth timber composed of western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*), Sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*), western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*) and Alaska yellow cedar (*Chamaecyparis nootkatensis*) from state lands in the vicinity of Edna Bay on Kosciusko Island. The volume to be offered totals approximately 5 million board feet. DOF would sell the timber as one large sale under AS 38.05.120 AS 38.05.120 for commercial use.

The management objectives for the proposed timber sale are:

1. To follow the Alaska Department of Natural Resources' (ADNR) constitutional mandate to encourage the development of the State's renewable resources (Article 8.1), making them available for maximum use consistent with the public interest.
2. To support the State's economy by providing royalties to the State in the form of stumpage receipts, and infuse the State's economy through wages, purchases, jobs, and business.
3. To help sustain the forest products sector in the SE Alaska economy, and to support the local economies of the communities within southern Southeast Alaska by creating additional jobs through road building, logging, trucking and potentially milling.

II. STATUTORY AND REGULATORY AUTHORITY

The Division is taking this action under the authority of

- AS 38.05.035(e) Best Interest Finding;
- AS 38.05.110-120 and 11 AAC 71, Timber Sale Statutes and Regulations; and
- AS 41.17.010-950 and 11 AAC 95, Forest Resources and Practices Statutes and Regulations.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD

The Division will maintain an administrative record regarding the decision of whether, or not, to proceed with the action as proposed. This record will be maintained at the DOF's Southeast Area Office filed as SSE-1384-K.

IV. SCOPE OF DECISION

This Preliminary Best Interest Finding (BIF) and draft Forest Land Use Plan (FLUP) are parts three and four of a six-part process to design, sell, and administer timber sales; for this timber sale the documents are combined into a single document. This preliminary BIF and draft FLUP describes the DOF's intent to sell approximately 186 acres of old growth timber composed of western hemlock, Sitka spruce, western red cedar, and Alaska yellow cedar on state land within the perimeter of the 637-acre Edna Bay East tract of the SESF. The following list summarizes the overall process:

Part 1: Regional Planning. The Department of Natural Resources develops area plans and state forest management plans to designate appropriate uses for state land, classify the land accordingly, and establish management guidelines for multiple use. These plans determine where timber sales are an allowed use, and what other uses must be considered when designing and implementing timber sales. Subsequent land use decisions must be

consistent with provisions contained within the applicable area and/or forest plans. The project area in this preliminary BIF is covered by the Southeast State Forest Plan (SESEFP) and the Edna Bay Subunit 8 of the Prince of Wales Island Area Plan (POWIAP). The Land Classification of the area is a mix of Settlement, Recreation, General Use, and Habitat Lands.

Part 2: Five-year Schedule of Timber Sales (AS 38.05.113). The Southern Southeast Area Office prepares a Five-Year Schedule of Timber Sales (FYSTS) every other year. The Schedule identifies proposed sales, including their general location, approximate acreage and/or estimated timber volume, and main access routes. The FYSTS is a scoping document that provides, for each proposed timber sale, an opportunity for the public, agencies, and industry to identify potential issues and areas of interest for further consideration in the BIF process. Under AS 38.05.113, proposed timber sales within the area covered by a BIF must appear in at least one of the two FYSTSs preceding the sale. This timber sale area has been identified in documents associated with the following FYSTS 2011-2015, 2013-2017, and 2023-2027.

Part 3: Best Interest Finding (AS 38.05.035(e)). DOF must adopt a BIF before selling timber. A Best Interest Finding is the decision document that:

- Ensures that the best interest of the State will be served by this proposed action,
- Establishes the overall area within which the timber sale may occur,
- Determines the amount of timber that will be offered for sale and the duration of the sale,
- Sets the overall harvest and reforestation strategy for the sale area,
- Determines whether the sale proposal complies with the Constitutional requirement to manage for sustained yield by evaluating the amount of timber in the sale and the annual allowable cut for the affected area,
- Selects the appropriate method of sale (i.e., competitive or negotiated sale), and
- Determines the appraisal method that will be used to determine the sale price.

Part 4: Forest Land Use Plans (AS 38.05.112). Prior to authorizing harvest of timber on any area greater than 10 acres, the DOF must adopt a site-specific Forest Land Use Plan (FLUP) for the harvest area. For this project, the DOF has prepared a draft FLUP for the harvest area within the overall sale area covered by this preliminary BIF and it is attached to this PBIF Appendix E. The draft FLUP specifies the site, size, timing, and harvest methods for harvest units within the sale area. The FLUP also addresses site-specific requirements for access road construction and maintenance, reforestation, and multiple use management. The FLUP is based on field-work and site-specific analyses by the DOF in consultation with appropriate regulatory agencies. The FLUP is subject to public review.

Part 5: Timber Sales and Contracts. Following final adoption of the BIF and the FLUP, the DOF may offer the timber for sale (negotiated or competitive bid) using the appropriate authority. The Division will sign a contract with the purchaser for each sale. The contract will include stipulations requiring compliance with the BIF, FLUP, and all applicable statutes and regulations.

Part 6: Sale Administration. DOF will administer the timber sale and conduct field inspections to ensure compliance with the BIF, FLUP, timber sale contract, and applicable laws, including the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act (FRPA) and regulations (AS 41.17 and 11 AAC 95), and forest management statutes and regulations in AS 38.05 and 11 AAC 71.

V. PROJECT LOCATION, LAND STATUS, AND DESCRIPTION

A. Location

The timber sale area is found within Sections 23, 24, and 26, Township 68 South, Range 76 East, Copper River Meridian (CRM). The sale area is found within the Craig D-5 NW USGS quadrangle. See Appendix A, Kosciusko Island East Timber Sale Maps, Best Interest Finding, SSE-1384-K Kosciusko East Timber Sale.

B. Title status

Patented to the state (patent No. 50-85-0112) under National Forest Community Grant 129 (NFCG 129).

C. Land use planning, classification, and management intent

The proposed timber sale area is located within the SESF. The State of Alaska's Division of Forestry and Fire Protection (DOF) is the land manager for all harvest units/settings within this proposed sale. The managing document is the Southeast State Forest Management Plan (SESFMP). The land proposed for harvest is managed under provisions cited in the SESFMP, adopted on February 29, 2016. The primary purpose of the state forest is, "timber management that provides for the production, utilization, and replenishment of timber resources while allowing other beneficial uses of public land and resources" (AS 41.17.200(a)). SESF lands are classified as Forest land.

Edna Bay and its vicinity is within the geographic region covered by the Prince of Wales Island Area Plan (POWIAP) revised in October 1998 and administered by the Division of Mining, Land and Water. This POWIAP covers all state land proximate to the island not within the SESF. State land covered in the POWIAP serves a variety of purposes with an emphasis on the development of the community of Edna Bay.

The Interagency Fire Management Plan includes all lands in the modified or full protection category.

D. Current access and land use

The sale is less than one mile from the State public float plane and boat dock on the northeast side of Edna Bay on Kosciusko Island. The main access to this sale is along the federally managed 1525000 road.

Federal land on Kosciusko has seen extensive timber harvesting since the early 1940's. The USFS ownership predominates on the island for several miles to the north of the sale area, along with a significant block of Sealaska regional Native corporation land. The last significant federal timber harvest activity on the island was the 32 million board foot Kosciusko GNA timber sale located 12 miles to the west. Prior activity occurred in the early 1980's; most roads are in a storage or deferred maintenance status. The area immediately to the north of the sale was logged in the 1970's and the west side of Limestone Point and portions of the hill north of Edna Bay were logged by A-frame during WWII.

The State created the Southeast State Forest in 2010 and 2011 from lands previously classified General Use, outside the Settlement classified areas. The State has sold a variety of timber sales, in various sizes, in the area since the early 2000's. The State currently has one active timber sale in operation to the west of Edna Bay referred to as the Edna Bay Parlay II Timber Sale SSE-1342-K.

The University of Alaska (UA) and the Alaska Mental Health Trust have also conducted timber harvests on the island during the past twenty years.

In late 2014, Sealaska Corporation received conveyance from the Forest Service of approximately 11,974 acres on Kosciusko Island. This block of land is located approximately three miles to the northwest of the proposed sale area. Sealaska managed a timber harvest operation on the island for two years after conveyance but is not currently operating in the area. Sealaska Corporation has described its management intent for the property is to focus on forest management. In 2018 Sealaska Corporation became the first entity in Alaska to be issued carbon-offset credits associated with its carbon sequestration projects. Since that time there has been no active commercial timber harvest operations under Sealaska Corporation ownership on Kosciusko Island.

The state subdivided the land to the west of the proposed Kosciusko East Timber Sale and sold residential lots bordering Edna Bay in the mid 1980's. The community has developed since that time and in 2014 was incorporated as the second-class City of Edna Bay. The proposed timber sale is within the municipal boundary. The petition for incorporation listed 42 people while the 2020 US Census lists 25 people in the community of Edna Bay. The city assumed road maintenance responsibility and harbor management and has developed a community bulk fuel facility on the east side of the bay adjacent to the public floatplane dock and harbor. The USFS in 2017, through a Federal Lands Access Grant, upgraded the road surface and drainage structures on the main public road through the community on the public right of way in the subdivision; this road is locally referred to as the Edna Bay Community Road or the 1520 Road.

Timber has been transferred from Kosciusko uplands to marine waters from several locations over the last century. Following USFS development of a road system on the island during and after WWII, Cape Pole, Edna Bay and to a lesser extent Shipley Bay have served as marine access facilities. Edna Bay due to its central location has repeatedly served that purpose. The shallow bathymetry of most of the bay and its semi-exposed orientation to prevailing winds are constraints to activity. The USFS retained federal ownership of suitable lands and established a marine access facility (MAF) on the north side of the bay in the late 1990's to move timber off the island by barge. While this MAF was built with the perspective that a facility was needed to move the timber resources proximate to Edna Bay, it has only seen limited use associated with the movement of personal use timber to local small sawmills. The MAF because of its configuration and proximity to the community has also been used to stage materials, store vehicles, launch small boats and from time to time has served as a landing zone for medical evacuation helicopters. Since its establishment, the MAF has been a source of local controversy because its primary purpose of facilitating the transport of logs via barge or raft is perceived by many in the community as conflicting with other uses of the facility by Edna Bay residents.

While the establishment of the State subdivision, and the subsequent development of the Edna Bay community, facilitated the connection of various the USFS system roads and other local roads built to access residential areas, it also fostered community concerns about commercial forest traffic, specifically log truck traffic, being routed through residential areas of the community. Due to the island's topography, the configuration of the USFS and other road systems, and the significant acreage of young-growth timber that would soon become economic to harvest, it became apparent in the early 2000's that future forest traffic through portions of the community would need to be managed in the interest of public safety. To help mitigate the issue, the State in 2017, built the West Edna Bay Log Transfer Facility (LTF). This LTF provides a more direct and protected location for marine transportation of timber harvested from the west side of the island. Separately, the USFS opted to retain its MAF on the north side of the bay to facilitate marine transportation of timber harvested from areas located to the north and east of the Bay.

Overall, the surrounding area experiences incidental use by the public for a variety of reasons related to semi-remote living styles, and activities associated with recreation and subsistence including, but not limited to berry picking, hiking, fishing, hunting and firewood gathering.

E. Background and description of proposal

1. Background:

The demand for State timber throughout Alaska, but especially in SE Alaska, is currently high due to the recent decline in federal timber sale offerings. A diversified economy with a timber industry component has been important to Southeast Alaska for over fifty years. By direction from the Governor and Legislature, the DOF manages its Southeast timber sale program to make commercial timber volume available, and to help sustain the region's timber industry and economy.

The DOF has been proposing and selling timber sales in the vicinity of Edna Bay since the early 2000's. In 2017, the DOF through an agreement with the University of Alaska (UA) Land Management Office, constructed a log transfer facility (LTF) and log sort-yard on the west side of Edna Bay which enabled the UA sell timber from its nearby forest lands. In 2017, the DOF, through a Good Neighbor Authority agreement (GNA) with the USFS, sold an additional 32 MMBF of federal timber which was processed through the State LTF. In 2022 and 2023 the DOF sold several timber sales out of the Kosciusko Island western tract of the Southeast State Forest. This recent series of timbers sales has enabled Alcan Timber and its operators to harvest timber on the island over the past six years. Sealaska Corporation also harvested timber for several years; those logs were processed and prepared for marine transport at the State LTF. It will likely be another 15 to 20 years before young-growth timber located on the western State land tract is merchantable at a scale sufficient to justify similar mobilization and timber harvest efforts. Mobilization costs to Kosciusko Island for a logging operation are relatively high because of its remote location. It was observed by the DOF, and its timber sale operator (Papac Alaska) timber located on the east side of the island might be most feasible to harvest in the short term due to existing markets for the old-growth timber that may not exist in the near future.

The DOF initially began reconnaissance activities on its eastern tract between 2011 and 2013 but elected to defer timber sale development in that area to focus its efforts on developing timber sales on the west side of the island. Due to reduced priorities at other locations in Southeast, DOF staff were able to reengage on the Kosciusko Island East project in the fall of 2023, while also conducting timber sale administration on other state and federal timber sales located to the west. Kosciusko Island East reconnaissance efforts examined timber types, potential road access, logging systems, geology, soils, hydrology, and fish and wildlife habitat within the proposed sale area. By Summer 2023, the DOF foresters had completed tasks defining the economically operable timber in the area. Locations of proposed road centerlines, drainage structure locations, harvest unit boundaries, anadromous fish retention areas, and associated natural resources were field-located and mapped by the end of October.

2. Timber Volume and Sustained Yield:

The timber is located on State Forest classified land. The total estimated sawlog volume for this 186-acre sale area is 5 million board feet. This volume is based on the 2016 Southern Southeast Area Operational Forest Inventory, interpretation of aerial and satellite imagery, and field reconnaissance.

The Division of Forestry and Fire Protection is required to manage its timber harvest on State Forest land on a sustained yield basis. "Sustained Yield" means the "achievement and maintenance in perpetuity of an annual or regular periodic output of the various renewable resources of the State land consistent with

multiple use” (AS 38.04.910). The Division’s policy is to define “regular periodic output” as out-put over a ten-year period. This is done to allow for market fluctuations and operational restrictions. Based on the DOF’s inventory of its land and the timber base, it has determined an annual allowable cut of 9,100 MBF per year for the Southern Southeast Area. The DOF will meter the volume offered for sale without exceeding the annual allowable cut. This action alone, and in combination with other timber sales that are sold, will be within the allowable cut and comply with sustained yield requirements. The duration of the timber sale contract(s) will be governed by the economic conditions at the time of the sale. The DOF in Southeast typically sets the contract duration at three to five years.

3. Harvest Unit Design:

Existing stand conditions within the sale area exhibit predominantly old-growth characteristics. Based on our experience, the forest would likely have significant wind damage if partially harvested. The sale area harvest settings are designed for even-aged management with clear-cut harvest using ground-based logging systems. The clear-cut silvicultural prescription is based on past harvest activities in Southeast Alaska and in other hemlock-spruce forests of the Pacific Northwest. The harvest settings are designed to minimize windthrow and the amount of residual damage to the remaining stands while minimizing common forest pests and diseases such as dwarf mistletoe (*Arceuthobium tsugense*) and black-headed budworm (*Acleris gloverana* (Walsingham)). Logging in combination with the clear-cut prescription allows for significant scarification of the seed bed and allowance of sunlight to reach the forest floor. This creates a post-harvest environment favorable to economically significant species such as Sitka spruce, western red cedar and Alaska-yellow cedar, which are less shade tolerant than western hemlock, an aggressive colonizer of the stand reinitiation phase. While two-aged or uneven-aged management prescriptions exist, the other benefit from even-aged management is that a timber manager recovers more revenue because their costs are distributed over a larger volume of timber for a given area. Given the configuration of the potentially operable sale boundaries relative to remaining timber, the lack of a larger available timber base and the remote nature of the sale, the added cost of a partial harvest relative to retained forest values in this area is not justified.

Reconnaissance by the DOF indicates that the area is harvestable using shovel logging techniques. This ground-based logging system will utilize directional timber falling techniques and benches on the terrain to access the timber. Soils integrity is relatively easy to manage using this method by employing adequate puncheon on skid trails which minimizes impacts to the soil and water quality. Puncheon is a term that refers to using nonmerchantable slash and logs to support the logging shovel on top of the organic soil mat. Use of puncheon not only minimizes compaction of soil it also helps to stabilize the soil, similar to tree root systems, from displacement by the machine or later by other forces such as surface water runoff.

This sale has been designed overall to avoid negative impacts to freshwater tributaries and anadromous fish habitat identified by the DOF during field reconnaissance and documented by ADF&G in its anadromous waters catalog.

4. Unit Access:

Access road design, construction, and maintenance will comply with the Forest Resources and Practices regulations (11 AAC 95.285-.355). Road standards and guidelines of the managing agency will be addressed to the extent prudent for the projected use. During operation of the timber sale all roads associated will receive timely and routine maintenance.

The existing road system on Kosciusko Island was constructed over the past several decades to accommodate the larger landowners' forest management activities of which the USFS is the principal manager. The USFS has constructed most of the infrastructure on the island. The community of Edna Bay has also developed and improved forest roads that are part of the community and the public road right of ways within the community using grants, in kind services, and infrastructure programs offered by the USFS and the State.

Existing Haul Routes Examined:

The DOF considered four separate haul routes to move the timber to market from the Kosciusko East timber sale area. These routes generally would use roads and log transfer facilities already in existence. Support of logging operations with any of the haul routes identified would likely increase traffic levels in the community and surrounding area regardless of the particular haul route used by the log trucks and other logging equipment. This additional road use would typically occur at the beginning and end of each day.

The examination of potential haul routes is a normal part of feasibility analysis but was also done in response to inquiries from the community of Edna Bay (Spring of 2023) at a city facilitated informational meeting with DOF staff. Some members of the community at the meeting had an interest in the feasibility of avoiding the community with log truck traffic because of traffic safety and the long-term impact on road integrity. Comment at the meeting also described the community use of the area surrounding the public float plane dock, the fuel facility, and the East Edna Bay MAF.

-Haul Route Option #1: Approximately 10.3 miles of road would be used to haul logs from the timber sale area north to an established Log Transfer Facility (LTF) in Shipley Bay developed by Sealaska Corporation to access their recent land grant on the island. The route would use a series of roads: the USFS 1525000 Road to the 150000 Road; this mainline route needs reconstruction on its approximately seven miles of length and reinstalment of the Trout Creek (105-50-10010) stream crossing that would require at least an 80-foot bridge; the refurbishment of several other notable stream crossings requiring short bridges along with 0.6 miles of new road construction to connect the 1534300 and the 1525000 Roads; and the re-establishment of 3.8 miles of road decommissioned by Sealaska Corporation in 2018 to access the Shipley Bay LTF. Several anadromous streams cross the latter section of the route and would also require re-installation of bridges. The re-establishment of the Shipley LTF would also be necessary as it was decommissioned along with the road system. The Shipley Bay facility is geographically isolated from other timber operations in Southeast Alaska and thus would likely have higher log shipping costs. The hauling route is relatively long and thus requires a larger number of trucks to match logging production rates and combined with the extensive road construction to produce a sale timeline that is longer than one season, has a significant lead time for the bridges needed and is operationally complex. The combined capital and operational costs make this route unfeasible for a timber sale of this size.

-Haul Route Option #2: Approximately 1.1 miles of the 1525000 Road (USFS) would be used to haul logs from the timber sale area to the East Edna Bay Marine Access Facility just west of the Public Floatplane Dock. The wood would be decked temporarily at that location and likely moved semi-daily to the West Edna Bay LTF via a mid-sized barge and then processed and bundled at the sort-yard for transfer to a ship at another location. This route covers approximately 0.9 mile of the 152500 Road. A half mile section of that road needs ditch line construction, relief culvert installations, and recrowning of the surface. Road width expansion from its current 14 feet width to allow two-way traffic would be desirable at several locations on the route. Trucking distance is relatively short.

Operations could be well supported from the existing facilities in the area with this alternative. The reliance on a barge transfer has been noted as a possible drawback due to high operational costs and the influence weather has on marine operations compared with an upland operations environment. Community use of the area may present some congestion that would require accommodation by the different interests. Users would need to interact with concentrated truck and barge traffic proximate to the community float. The city operates a fuel facility in the area which would necessitate the need to coordinate fuel barge deliveries with the log barge traffic. The primary mitigation strategy would be the proposed widening of the haul road and operational communication with the city and public. This road reconstruction in general is observed by the DOF to be useful to the community regardless of the harvest of timber because of the road's current poor condition.

The USFS MAF on the east side of the bay is a relatively small but adequate footprint for the purpose and while it was originally constructed for the movement of logs it has not experienced significant use for that purpose to date. Because of its age, some refurbishment of the drive-down and barge bulkhead would be necessary for log transfer use. An existing short bypass road allows local traffic to avoid the log transfer area. The MAF has experienced notable other incidental access use by the community primarily associated with launching and storing boats. Unauthorized storage of old vehicles and trailers is occurring along with unknown duration storage of building materials (piling, lumber, etc.). Comment was provided during the 2023 community meeting that the site is occasionally used for helicopter medical evacuation by the US Coast Guard. While log storage at the site would decrease the workable area of the site for helicopter landing operations, helicopter landing could still be accommodated because an adequate amount of area will be required to be kept clear for the unloading of trucks and the loading of the barge. The term of the imposition would be short-term as the projected logging operation use of the facility would be the shortest in time duration of the alternatives and projected to last less than one operating season.

-Haul Route Option #3: Approximately 9.6 miles of existing roads (1525000, 1520303, 1520200) would be utilized to haul logs from the timber sale area, through the community of Edna Bay to the existing State LTF on the southwest side of Edna Bay. This route is along the existing 1525000 Road until reaching the 1520000 Road within the community of Edna Bay. From here the route would head along another 2.8 miles of public road (a public right of way) until reaching the USFS managed 152000 Road located on private land on the west side of the community then continuing another 1.6 miles south on the road until reaching the junction of the state 1520070 Road. The road is on a combination of SESF and UA ownership for another 3.7 miles until reaching the active State of Alaska LTF. This route has a relatively long hauling distance. Capital road costs were estimated that included the upgrade of the 1525 Road as described in Route #2 as well as improving the grade on the west side of Charlie Creek, upgrading drainage structures on several sections of the community road, and resurfacing the 1520 Road from its departure from the school area to the junction with the state 1520070 Road to the West Edna Bay LTF. The road could be additionally improved by adding pullouts to the community road at several locations. The public road through the community appeared capable of handling the added traffic at the projected log hauling speed of 15 MPH. The use of this route is in large part feasible due to upgrades made by the USFS to the bridge and road surface in 2017. Several sections of the road were improved by the USFS but due to the age of the road it may need additional material added as use is applied; this appears feasible and is to be expected with forest operations. This route ranked slightly more expensive than Route #2 as far as cost although it has double the project timeline because of the additional construction and added trucking. The number of trucks hauling daily may be achievable within the present equipment and labor pool located in the area. The route exposes the project to the largest footprint of public traffic out of all the

alternatives and there is an assumed cost that may be encountered with maintaining the older sections of the road. Risks appear to be manageable within existing methods. It has a projected operations length of less than one operating season.

-Haul Route Option #4: Approximately 21.7 miles of road would be utilized to haul logs from the timber sale area northwest to the existing USFS tie-in road (1520500) and around on the USFS 152000 and 150000 roads, south into the Southeast State Forest Road and into the west side of Edna Bay (the State LTF) via the state road system. More than half of this route requires reconditioning or reconstruction of roads to be used. Use of this route would remove the log hauling traffic from the community. Truck hauling time would be relatively high and combined with the extensive construction needed, would produce a sale timeline that would be long and challenging to manage. The USFS tie-in road (1520500) has several sections that are relatively steep for adverse hauling of logs and would markedly slow trucking and be a burden to keep surfaced properly for traction. Many log trucks would be required to keep other costs within economic scope of the timber sale. The large quantity of trucks required by this alternative was considered by the DOF to not be reasonable to expect of the operator; this many assets on the road would also drastically increase complexity of support operations. Costs of this alternative although not as high as Route #1 do not appear to be feasible and would likely require more than one operating season due to the road construction lead time.

Preferred Alternative:

Haul Route #2 with the use of the USFS MAF on the east side of the bay is the preferred alternative chosen by the DOF in this preliminary decision due to the minimal exposure to unknown risk and overall project cost. The concerns voiced by the community and observed by DOF are reasonable to manage with the resources, revenue, and time available.

The primary access proposed is the USFS mainline route on the north side of the sale (1525000 Road) which passes through several ownerships and the community of Edna Bay. The 15250000 Road between the sale and the public dock areas has significant surface irregularities precipitated by a combination of its steep grade and years of incidental use with limited provisions to direct runoff drainage on its surface. The width of the right of way and grade of the alignment limits the scope of feasible improvement work on the 1525000 Road. Regardless, per the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act (FRPA), the DOF will specify contractually in the timber sale that any road utilized by forest operations will be brought into regulatory compliance at a minimum and meet the intent of the managing agency's standard. Assessment by the DOF indicates the road can be markedly improved and left in a condition post timber sale that is feasible for the community and the USFS to maintain in the future. Proposed work on the 15250000 Road associated with this timber sale is outlined in the FLUP and will include widening in areas, establishment of a readily drainable surface crown on the road, a ditch line and the establishment of appropriate relief culvert(s) and the replacement of the one surface water drainage structure located at the bottom of the hill.

Proposed New Road:

The proposed roads within the timber sale units were located by the DOF and total 1.57 Miles in length. The projected new secondary trunk road ties to the 1525000 Road from within the SESF just south of the northern common property line with the USFS and heads southerly into the sale where two spurs truncate to accommodate yarding activities.

The road system, with a few exceptions, is designed to be constructed with grades less than or equal

to 12%. Some drilling and shooting will be required to remove rock obstructions and facilitate good drainage or to bench the road for short steep segments on rock outcrops. The site is well drained with very little surface water evident. Two culverts have been proposed along the main route. These drainage structures are in an area where no water was observed but evidence of intermittent stream beds could be found with narrow, shallow channels of exposed rubble and gravel. Relief culverts will also be utilized if surface flow pools against the road.

5. Appraisal method:

DOF will appraise the timber value in compliance with 11 AAC 71.092. The sale area will be appraised using a residual value appraisal method. Selling values and extraction cost data are obtained from industry sources, the United States Forest Service, and previous operations.

F. Resources and management

1. Timber

a. Timber Stand Composition and Structure:

Timber types are primarily a mix of old-growth western hemlock and Sitka spruce with a minor component of old-growth western red cedar particularly in Settings 1-1 and 3-1. Sitka spruce is characterized by dead or broken tops with frost cracks and dieback, though significant volume remains throughout the sale area. Western hemlock of considerable height is located within Settings 2-1, 2-2, and 2-3. Defoliation from black headed budworm and hemlock sawfly (*Neodiprion tsugae* Middleton) was evident but has not resulted in significant levels of tree mortality. Dwarf mistletoe infections are considerable with numerous hemlocks infected throughout the area. Young-growth spruce-hemlock stands are located along the unit line boundary to the west and south of the sale where sub-merchantable timber remains in rotation. Settings 2-3, 3-1, 4-1, and 4-2 may contain minor amounts of young-growth timber from these stands.

b. Stand Silvics:

The focus of this proposed sale is to harvest old-growth timber. Timber stands included in the sale have relatively high commercial timber volumes per acre. Some locations of the sale area have experienced significant disturbance from numerous wind events creating a variety of canopy heights. The stand is perpetually being disturbed and has a significant amount of woody material on the forest floor from this disturbance type.

Outside of the sale area to the south near Limestone Point a topographically isolated old-growth Sitka spruce, western hemlock, and western red cedar stand remains. The poor quality and low volume of these stands is apparently associated with legacy blowdown events which have caused substantial damage to the spruce. The hemlock is shorter with more defect than trees within the proposed sale and most of the merchantable western red cedar is short and dead topped. Two eagle nest trees are adjacent to the stand, and the site is also relatively steep which has led the DOF to exclude the area due to poor timber quality and operability.

Older young-growth-stands of spruce-hemlock are nearing merchantability adjacent to the proposed sale. Regular blowdown events seem to be a common occurrence even within this younger age timber type with small openings in the overstory scattered throughout the stands. Some of the dominant and codominant spruce receiving direct light and good position on the site have reached merchantable size and contain at least one merchantable log. Due to the high ratio of pole timber

to sawlogs the adjacent stands to the west and south are expected to become economically feasible to harvest in the next 10-20 years based on field reconnaissance. The collective adjacent young-growth stand is approximately 100 acres on the SESF with additional regeneration on Settlement classified lands.

- c. Reforestation and Site Preparation: The sale area will be reforested in compliance with the Forest Resources and Practices regulations (11 AAC 95.375-.390) unless it is converted to other use. The DOF will conduct post-harvest reforestation inspections of all areas of commercial timber harvest to ensure that the stocking of natural regeneration meets or exceeds FRPA reforestation requirements.

Natural regeneration is the preferred regeneration method for this sale, and it is anticipated that adequate stocking levels will be achieved within five years after harvest. Experience with this regeneration method on POW has shown that well-stocked stands are readily established within regulatory timelines. Logging will break down the slash piece size and residuals to the ground level, accelerating decomposition and opening more growing space. Disturbance associated with logging will also increase seed bed opportunity and seedling survival by creating mineral soil access and micro relief.

Sitka spruce and western red cedar are the preferred species for reforestation in the projected future market conditions. Spruce and western red cedar will likely be the favored and dominant species following harvest due to anticipated levels of ground scarification and open stand conditions during the stand reinitiation phase. Scarification through ground-based harvest methods disturb the vegetative mat and in turn provides a more receptive seed bed. Western hemlock will also be a major component of the regenerated stand since it currently occupies the site and provides a prolific seed source.

- d. Topography and Soils:
The proposed sale will be designed and managed to prevent significant impairment of the land and water with respect to renewable resources (AS41.17.060(c)(5)).

The sale area is situated on an undulating coastal peninsula, with a southerly aspect and total elevation ranging from sea level to around 350 FT. The sale area primarily has a slope of less than 35 percent though some short steeper pitches exist. Karst limestone geology with rock fins, fissures, and semi-vegetated outcroppings are found throughout. The overall site is moderately well-drained with few indications of year-round surface waters.

Karst characteristics that may be more susceptible to hydraulic change have been field identified at other locations on Kosciusko but have not been identified at this site. Harvest operations will be instructed to maneuver and manipulate timber and slash to minimize change in karst structures, post-harvest soil erosion and to maintain any evident natural drainage patterns. Sediment movement is recognized as a risk to karst structures and will be mitigated where those features manifest.

During times of saturated soil conditions operations will be expected to adhere to Best Management Practices (BMPs). Machines will be properly supported by puncheon or slash while maneuvering in areas with indications of emergence and/or submergence of surface water. If crossings

are required machines will be expected to remove the woody material from the stream when finished. Turbidity will not be an issue in this sale given the lack of surface water and infiltration rate of the soil.

2. Wildlife habitat and harvest.

As required by AS 41.17.098, DOF provides due deference to ADF&G to ensure all wildlife habitat issues are addressed by the proposed timber sale design.

The United State Fish and Wildlife Service publishes a geodatabase of identified bald eagle nest locations. The nest trees identified are a compilation product of multiple aerial and boat surveys conducted in the early 1970s through the 1990s in cooperation with other federal and state biologists. The intent of the list is to communicate and maintain knowledge on the nesting locations relative to other habitat values that the species find useful; previous work indicated that these trees are used through multiple generations and can be important for the viability of the species in an area. Part of the reason the list was generated was because of previous concerns for the species nationally; it was formerly listed as an endangered species. The species never was endangered in Alaska, nevertheless resource development activity in Alaska precipitated the effort to document and preserve the nest locations. The species is no longer on the national endangered species list. While the larger trees identified in the survey have significance, they are often subject to environmental damage or do not represent the only nesting option. Due to the age of the information, the location of these tree is often misplaced geographically in the database if it is not coincident with a clear geographic feature because of the course mapping used in the survey, the method of the survey and the skill set of the biologist at the time of the survey. Per 11 AAC 95.340 (c), the DOF avoids the nest locations in the planning of state timber sales. The DOF in 2023 applied sub-meter grade GPS in coordination with Arc Field Maps and USFWS point vector data to attempt field location of the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) nest trees. No eagle nest trees or sign (feathers, bones, tree tags, etc.) were located during field visits. Bald eagles were heard overhead but not located while perched or feeding. While specific nests were not identified with recent efforts, large trees matching the descriptions are present in the area and were reserved for habitat purposes. A 330-foot retention area was applied to each historical eagle nest tree location within the sale area which influenced the placement of the harvest boundary along the eastern side of the sale.

The DOF conducted a timber cruise to gauge timber merchantability using a grid sampling system that covered the entire sale area and conducted extensive sale reconnaissance efforts. Black bear (*Ursus americanus*) scat and claw marks up the boles of several trees was observed in the sale area; no potential bear den sites were observed. Wolf (*Canis lupus*) scat was also observed along the 1525000 Road, on the north side of the sale area; no potential den sites were observed.

Sitka black-tailed deer (*Odocoileus hemionus sitkensis*) scat was found in numerous locations throughout the sale area, no live animals were observed. The proposed harvest area will likely diminish deer habitat in the long term. While the surrounding area of Edna Bay has had significant timber harvested historically, this specific project area offers undisturbed nondevelopable area on either side of it that has a habitat function that will continue. The harvest disturbance is anticipated to increase food values for deer within its footprint for the next 20 years; precommercial tree thinning could extend the period of forage availability another 20 years.

3. Fish Habitat, Water Resources, and Water Quality.

The proposed sale has been designed and managed to protect fish habitat and water quality in compliance with the Forest Resources and Practices Act and regulations (AS 41.17 and 11 AAC 95). As required by AS 41.17.098, DOF provides due deference to ADF&G to ensure all fish habitat issues are addressed by the proposed timber sale design. DOF provides due deference to the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) for all water quality issues.

There is one cataloged anadromous stream known locally as Hamlin or Buggy Creek (103-90-10610) located on the northeast boundary of the timber sale. A timber retention area of 100 FT or more was flagged on the south side of the creek using pink timber boundary ribbon and stream retention course ribbon (blue/white stripped) tied together. Riparian habitat function related to this waterbody will be maintained with this timber retention area.

One tributary to Hamlin/Buggy Creek was field identified. Two other very small surface water streams were identified to the south. All these waters appear to have intermittent surface flow and did not have indications of fish or fish habitat. These waters can be avoided with direct harvesting activity, but best management practices are required of operations to maintain water quality.

Several intermittent surface water quality streams were identified. To protect the water quality of all non-fish bearing waters the DOF will require a combination of directional felling, partial suspension of logs, and removal of logging debris and slash from all stream courses during harvest operations.

4. Recreation, Tourism, and Scenic Resources.

The timber sale area is not known to provide significant recreation resources. This timber sale is not expected to adversely affect recreational opportunities on Kosciusko Island due to its location and size.

Incidental tourism is expected to remain at its current state as there are minimal opportunities for lodging, groceries, and general services within the community of Edna Bay. Commercial tourism is not known to occur in the area. Given the removed location of the proposed sale units relative to the rest of Davidson Inlet, impact or disruption to the general public's use are not expected.

Scenic resources are expected to be altered temporarily when viewing the sale from Davidson Inlet, from aircraft transiting or along the 1525000 Road. This style of view shed will be like other locations in southeast where periodic timber harvest has occurred. Proposed sale roads will allow the public to view the ocean and open landscape from some locations within the sale.

5. Cultural Resources.

DOF works with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to identify and avoid known cultural, historic, or prehistoric sites in planning the proposed access routes and harvest areas. The DOF visited the site area with SHPO in 2013 to assess historic site potential relative to topography and a known historical site to the east. This survey did not indicate resources that needed further study or protection within the sale area.

If additional archaeological or historical sites are identified, proposed harvest areas and road locations will be appropriately adjusted to avoid conflicts. If any historic or archaeological sites are encountered during road construction or harvest activities, DOF will immediately inform SHPO and take action to protect the resources.

6. Subsurface Resources

There is no known current mining activity in the immediate area. Other than sharing some of the same access roads, this sale should have no impact on the potential mining resources or mining activity in this area. Karst features found within the sale area will be taken into consideration and avoided where feasible.

G. Costs and benefits

Making the timber available on State land is in keeping with the Alaska Constitution and the intent of the governor and legislature to make the resource available in a sustainable manner commensurate with demand. The SESF was created with this vision in mind.

Based on DOF observations of the project area and historic markets, timber revenue is projected to cover administration, access and operating costs for this sale area and return stumpage royalty to the State. Kosciusko is an established location for timber harvesting with known risks and costs of operation. The existing POW labor force can access the area by boat from Naukati and by plane from several other localities. The log transfer sites, logging camp and other community resources are established resources. The operator and timber purchaser currently situated on Kosciusko Island have voiced an interest in the use of these timber resources and in continuing their operations proximate to the community.

The community of Edna Bay is likely also to realize tangible benefits for some of its residents. Current access to the subdivision on the east side of the bay is somewhat hindered due to the condition of the old road system from the state float to the top of the hill. Timber sale access to the sale area will reestablish this roadbed such that it may be possible to maintain within the observed resources of the City of Edna Bay. Lot owners in general on this side of the bay are constrained with the current access due to the surface condition of the road. The projected road surface will be a significantly better surface to drive on for most people. Improvement of the road is projected to also benefit the broader community with improved subsistence access to the USFS and State managed land to the east.

While the DOF encourages utilization of the timber resource by the timber purchaser, significant residual firewood potential typically is present after a timber sale is logged. This proposed timber sale is substantially closer to the community than the sales sold in the past ten years to the west. The DOF will consider leaving the road system open to some degree if demand is indicated by the community and a method is achievable within the community to actively manage the road condition in the DOF's absence.

Telephonic and data communications have generally been less than desired in Edna Bay with the legacy microwave system and with alternatives related to expensive satellite systems. The DOF experienced reliable cell phone coverage in the fall of 2023 from the proposed timber sale road system while conducting field work on the eastern side of the peninsula.

Timber sales have traditionally created broad economic benefits to the communities of Southeast Alaska. The business communities on POW and other nearby SE communities will receive direct economic benefits by providing support services for the operators such as fuel, food, housing, medical and miscellaneous supplies.

VI. PUBLIC REVIEW

The public and agencies are invited to review and comment on this Preliminary Best Interest Finding and draft Forest Land Use Plan. Objections or comments pertaining to the proposed action must be received in writing by the DOF Southeast Area Office **by 4:00 pm January 25, 2024** to ensure consideration and review. Commenters are encouraged to confirm receipt of their comments by the DOF prior to the submission deadline. Comments should be mailed to the State of Alaska, Division of Forestry, 2417 Tongass Avenue, Ketchikan, Alaska 99901 or emailed to dnr.dof.sse@alaska.gov. For more information, please contact Greg Staunton at 907-225-3070 or by email at dnr.dof.sse@alaska.gov. To be eligible to appeal the final decision, a person must have provided written comment on this Preliminary Best Interest Finding and draft Forest Land Use Plan by the deadline of: **4:00 pm January 25, 2024**.

VII. PUBLIC NOTICE

The preliminary best interest finding, and decision is publicly noticed in compliance with AS 38.05.945. Notice is posted on the Alaska Online Public Notice System. Notices are also posted at the Ketchikan, Craig, and Thorne Bay Public Libraries. Mailed notices were distributed to a mailing list maintained by the Southeast Area Office and public notices were sent to the post offices of Edna Bay, Ketchikan, Ward Cove, Craig, Klawock, Thorne Bay, Coffman Cove, Naukati, Metlakatla, Wrangell and Petersburg. A legal notice is also provided in the Ketchikan Daily News and the Island Post.

VIII. RECOMMENDATION AND PRELIMINARY Decision

After due consideration of all pertinent information, the ADNR has reached the following preliminary decision: to offer for sale approximately 186 acres of old growth forest composed of western hemlock, Sitka spruce, western red cedar and Alaska yellow cedar on Southeast State Forest land. Harvest activities on the Southeast State Forest lands will follow the management intent of the of the Southeast State Forest Plan. The DOF finds that this decision satisfies the objectives stated in this document and it is in the best interest of the State to proceed with this action under its authority in AS 38.05.035(e) (Powers and Duties of the Director) and AS 38.05.110-120; 11 AAC 71 (Timber Sale Statutes and Regulations; and AS 41.17.010-.950 and 11 AAC 95 (Forest Resources and Practices Statutes and Regulations).

IX. SIGNATURE

Greg Staunton, Area Forester
Alaska Division of Forestry

Date

X. APPENDICES

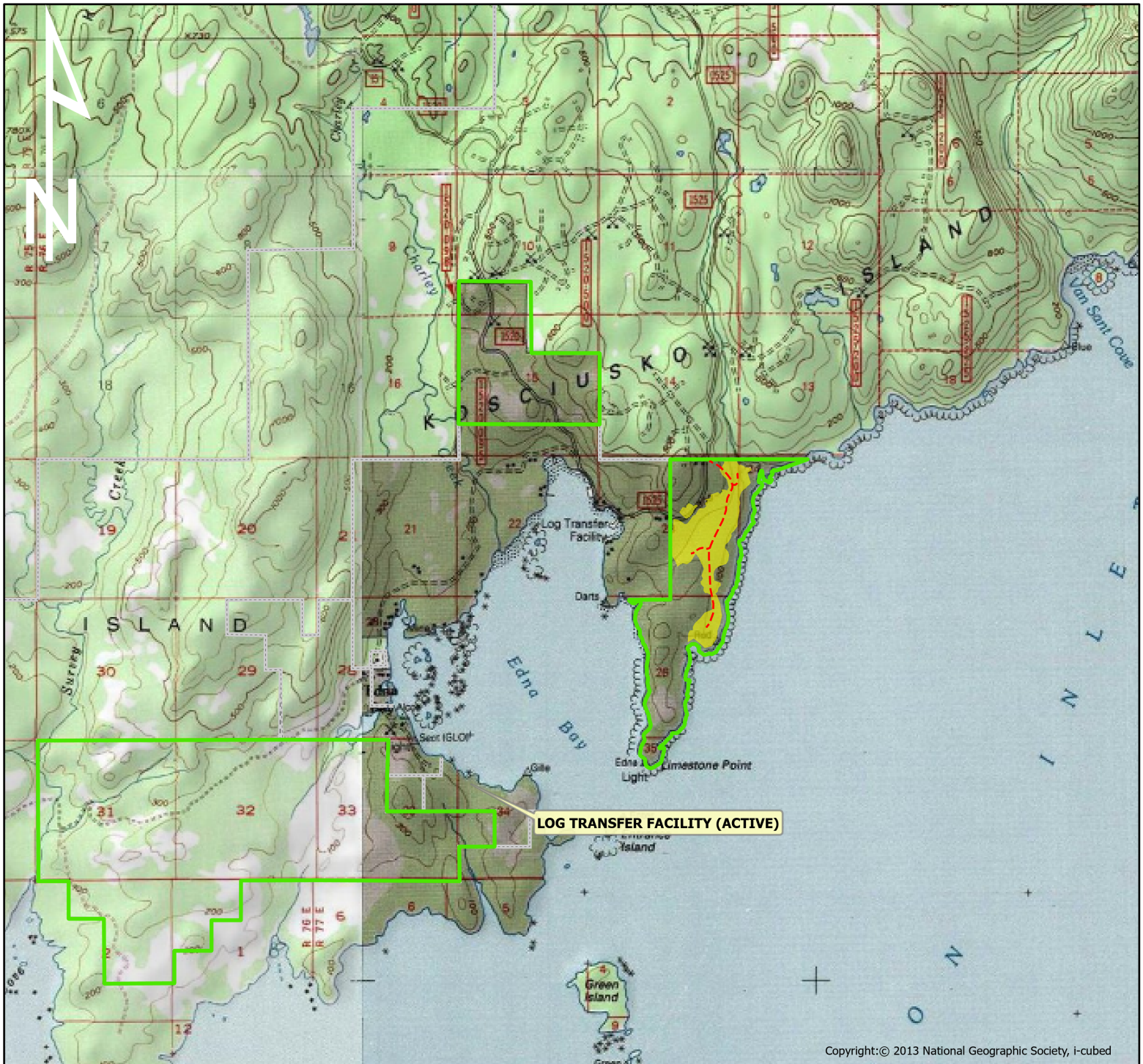
Appendix A	SSE-1384-K Kosciusko East Timber Sale Maps
Appendix B	References
Appendix C	Appeal Regulations (reserved)
Appendix D	Kosciusko East Timber Sale Comments & Responses (reserved)
Appendix E	SSE-1384-K Kosciusko East Forest Land Use Plan

Appendix A SSE-1384-K Kosciusko East Timber Sale Maps

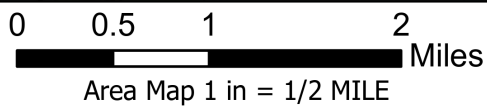
Vicinity Map (one page)

Haul Comparison Map (one page)

Unit Maps (three pages/ see FLUP Appendix A)

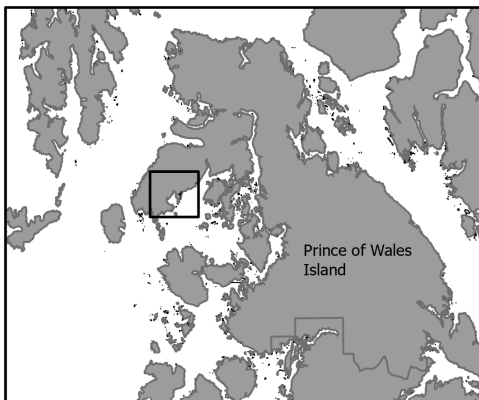


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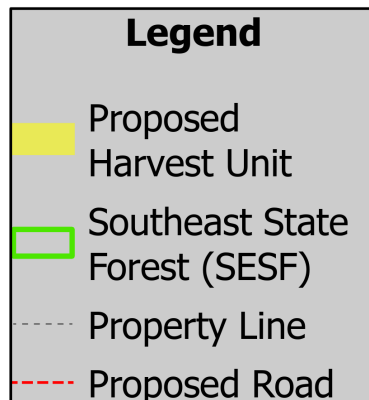


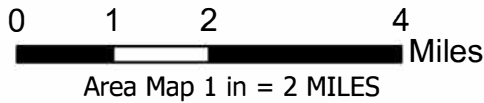
T68S R76E, Section(s) 23, 24, 26
Copper River Meridian

**APPENDIX A1
SSE-1384-K
KOSCIUSKO EAST
TIMBER SALE
AREA MAP**

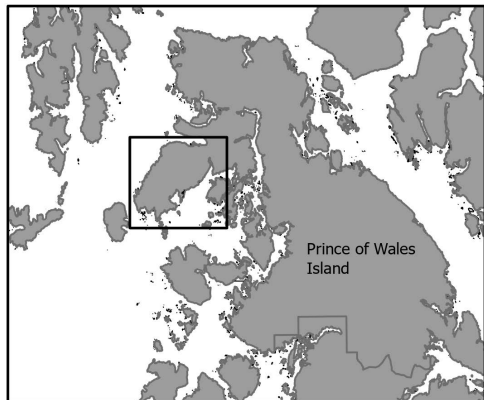


Vicinity Map 1 in = 32 miles

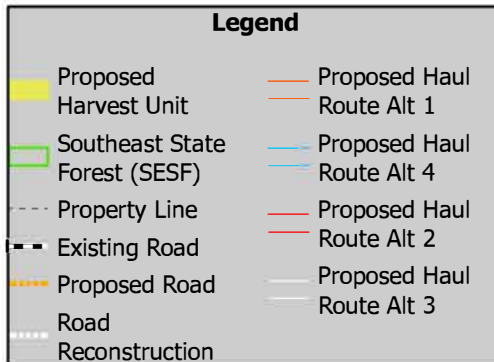




T68S R76E, Section(s) 23, 24, 26
Copper River Meridian



Vicinity Map 1 in = 32 miles



APPENDIX A3 HAUL ROUTE ALTERNATIVES SSE-1384-K KOSCIUSKO EAST TIMBER SALE



Appendix B References

Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry, Annual Board and Agency Reports on the effectiveness of the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act and regulations. Reports retrievable from: <http://forestry.alaska.gov/alaskaboardforestry.htm>

Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry, Southern Southeast Area Office, *Five-year Schedule of Timber Sales*. Retrievable from: <http://forestry.alaska.gov/timber/ketchikan.htm#fiveyear>

Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry, Southern Southeast Area, Operational Forest Inventory for State and General Use Lands, Adopted February 9, 2016. Report retrievable from: <http://forestry.alaska.gov/timber/forestinventories>

Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Mining Land and Water, *Prince of Wales Area Plan*, Adopted: Revised October 1998. Retrievable from: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/planning/areaplans/>

Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Mining Land and Water, Alaska Mapper. Retrievable from: <https://soa-dnr.maps.arcgis.com/home/index.html>

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Catalog of Waters Important for Spawning, Rearing, or Migration of Anadromous Fishes- Southeastern Region, Alaska Department of Fish and Wildlife, Division of Sport Fish and Habitat.

Minnillo, Mark, Biologist, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Habitat, personal communications.

United States Forest Service Geographic Information System Database.

Wikipedia. Shovel logging. Accessed at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shovel_logging

Appendix C Appeal and Request for Reconsideration Regulations (reserved)

Appendix D SSE-1384-K Kosciusko East Timber Sale Comments & Responses (reserved)

Appendix E Kosciusko East Timber Sale Forest Land Use Plan SSE-1384-K

State of Alaska
Department of Natural Resources
Division of Forestry & Fire Protection



Coastal Region-Southeast Area Office
Draft Forest Land Use Plan

Kosciusko East Timber Sale
SSE-1384-K

December 2023

Abbreviations

ADEC	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
ADF&G	Alaska Department of Fish and Game
ADNR	Alaska Department of Natural Resources
BIF	Best interest finding
DMLW	Division of Mining, Land and Water
DOF	Division of Forestry & Fire Protection
FLUP	Forest Land Use Plan
FRPA	Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act
FYSTS	Five-Year Schedule of Timber Sales
MBF	Thousand board feet
OHA	Office of History and Archeology
POG	Productive old growth
POW	Prince of Wales
POWIAP	Prince of Wales Island Area Plan
ROW	Right-of-way
SESF	Southeast State Forest
SESFMP	Southeast State Forest Management Plan
UA	University of Alaska
USFS	United States Forest Service

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I. Introduction

Project File Number: SSE-1384-K

Division of Forestry & Fire Protection Office: Southeast
Area Forester: Greg Staunton
Forest Practices Geographic Region (AS 41.17.950): Region I

This Draft Forest Land Use Plan (FLUP) covers proposed forest operations on approximately 186 acres of land on Kosciusko Island, approximately 1/2 mile to the east of the community of Edna Bay. It is intended to provide the best available information regarding the proposed harvest of timber, and management of other non-timber uses in compliance with AS 38.05.112 and AS 41.17.060, and must be adopted by the DNR before the proposed activity can occur.

This Draft Forest Land Use Plan is for timber sale(s) which have been determined to be in the best interest of the state pursuant to AS 38.05.035 (e) and AS 38.05.945. This FLUP does not determine whether or not to access and sell timber within the timber sale area, nor the method of sale. Those decisions have been made previously in the Best Interest Finding and are not appealable under this FLUP.

This Draft Forest Land Use Plan is for timber sale(s) for which a Preliminary Best Interest Finding is currently out for review. A final best interest finding must be completed prior to adoption of a FLUP pursuant to AS 38.05.035 (e) and AS 38.05.945;

This Forest Land Use Plan is for timber to be harvested that does not require a final finding pursuant to AS 38.05.035 (e) and notification under AS 38.05.945.

A draft of this plan was distributed to the Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) and the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) for their review and comments relevant to the consistency of this proposed project with the statutes governing forest land use plans (AS 38.05.112) and the requirements of the Alaska Forest Resources & Practices Act (AS 41.17) and its Regulations (11 AAC 95).

The public and agencies are invited to comment on specific requirements for harvest, access, and reforestation operations in this draft FLUP. The FLUP addresses site specific plans and decisions related to resources identified in the best interest finding. The decision on whether, or not, to offer timber for sale is made through the concurrent best interest finding process and is not subject to review under the FLUP. The FLUP provides the structural framework and operational constraints during timber operations.

Objections or comments pertaining to the draft FLUP must be received in writing to the DOF Southeast Area Forester's Office by **January 25th, 2024** to ensure consideration for review. Comments should be mailed to the State of Alaska, Division of Forestry and Fire Protection, 2417 Tongass Avenue, Suite 213, Ketchikan, AK 99901 or by email to dnr.dof.sse@alaska.gov. For more information, you may contact the Southeast Area Forester at: 907-225-3070. To be eligible to appeal the final decision, a person must have provided written comment by **January 25th, 2024**.

After public and agency review of the draft FLUP, the DOF will review comments, make changes as appropriate, and adopt the FLUP. An eligible person affected by this decision, and who provided timely written comment to the department, may appeal the decision to the DNR Commissioner per AS 44.37.011 and 11 AAC 02.

Other Documents are referenced in this FLUP. This timber sale is designed to be consistent with the management intent of the following documents:

- Alaska Forest Resources & Practices Act
- Southeast State Forest Management Plan
- Prince of Wales Island Area Plan
- Kosciusko Island East Timber Sale Best Interest Finding SSE-1384-K

The administrative record for this sale is maintained at the Division of Forestry & Fire Protection Southeast Area Office filed as SSE-1384-K.

A. Legal description

Sections 23, 24, and 26, Township 68 South, Range 76 East, Copper River Meridian (CRM). The sale area is found within the Craig D-5 NW USGS quadrangle. See also map in Appendix A.

B. Operational Period

Calendar years 2024-2025

C. Timber Disposal

- Timber will be sold and will have a contract administrated by the State.
- Timber will be available to the public; permits obtained by the public will be issued by the State.
- Other

D. Objectives and Summary

1. To follow the Alaska Department of Natural Resources’ (ADNR) constitutional mandate to encourage the development of the State’s renewable resources, making them available for maximum use consistent with the public interest;
2. To help the State’s economy by providing royalties to the State in the form of stumpage receipts, an infusion to the State’s economy through wages, purchases, jobs, and business.
3. To help the local economy of the communities within southern Southeast Alaska by creating additional jobs due to the combination of road building, logging, trucking and potentially milling.

II. Affected Land Owners/Jurisdictions

A. State

Activity on ownership:	Access Easement	Harvest	Written Representative Approval
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Southeast State Forest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other state land managed by DNR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> University of Alaska	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Trust	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> School Trust	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

B. Other Land Interests

Land Interest, Representative: USFS Road Reservations, USFS District Ranger and Engineering Staff

Land Interest, Representative: Public Use Easements, Maintenance delegated to the City of Edna Bay, Mayor of Edna Bay.

III. Harvest Methods, Silvicultural Actions, and Management of Non-timber Resources

Forest operations will be designed to:

- Protect fish habitat and water quality in compliance with the best management practices in 11 AAC 95.260-.370,

- Manage for the other land uses and activities identified in AS 41.17.060 and the Best Interest Finding for this timber sale, and
- Ensure prompt reforestation and maintenance of site productivity in compliance with AS 41.17.060(c) and 11 AAC 95 .375-.390.

Harvest and Silvicultural Methods:

- The silvicultural actions are described in this document, and no prescription was written or is necessary.
- A silvicultural prescription has been written and is attached to this document in Appendix B.

A. Timber Stand Description and History

Timber types are primarily a mix of old-growth western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*), Sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*), western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*), and Alaska yellow cedar (*Chamaecyparis nootkatensis*). Young-growth stands of Sitka spruce and western hemlock are found along the unitline and adjacent to the proposed sale. These adjacent stands were previously harvested during the period of WWII.

B. Timber Harvest Activities

Timber Harvest Activities are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. Timber Harvest Activities

Unit-Setting ID	Acres	Topography	Silvicultural Action	Logging Method
1-1	20	Irregular Complex Slopes	Even-aged Management utilizing a clear-cut system	Shovel Logging
2-1	26	Irregular Complex Slopes	Even-aged Management utilizing a clear-cut system	Shovel Logging
2-2	29	Irregular Complex Slopes	Even-aged Management utilizing a clear-cut system	Shovel Logging
2-3	33	Irregular Complex Slopes	Even-aged Management utilizing a clear-cut system	Shovel Logging
3-1	31	Irregular Complex Slopes	Even-aged Management utilizing a clear-cut system	Shovel Logging
4-1	26	Irregular Complex Slopes	Even-aged Management utilizing a clear-cut system	Shovel Logging
4-2	16	Irregular Complex Slopes	Even-aged Management utilizing a clear-cut system	Shovel Logging
5-1	5	Irregular Complex Slopes	Even-aged Management utilizing a clear-cut system	Shovel Logging

C. Site Preparation

- Site preparation will not be necessary. There will be sufficient soil disturbance by logging to forego the need for additional ground scarification.
- Site preparation will be implemented and described in Table 2:

Table 2. Site Preparation

Unit ID	Acres	Site Preparation Method	Date of Completion
		Not Applicable	

D. Slash Abatement

- Potential for insect infestations caused by slash accumulations exists. Slash abatement for controlling infestations will be implemented as required by 11 AAC 95.370.
- Scatter slash; accumulations will be kept to less than 2 feet in height. The operator will use slash for puncheon in shovel logging trails to protect soil from displacement, erosion and compaction.
- Slash will be disposed of by the operator Slash will be disposed of by the State
- Other - method of slash disposal: removal off site crushing or grinding burning
- Burn permits necessary from DOF and DEC to be acquired.
- The operator will contact the DOF local area office prior to ignition of debris.

E. Soil Stability / Erosion / Mass Wasting

- Maximum percent side slopes are $\leq 50\%$
- Maximum percent side slopes are $> 50\%$

Percentage of sale area with slopes $> 50\%$: 12%

Maximum percent slopes: 80%

Steeper slopes all located on short, isolated pitches less than 100 feet length on karst bed rock formations.

- There are no indicators of unstable areas.
- Indicators of unstable areas were identified and will be mitigated by actions indicated below.

F. Timber Harvest—Surface Water Protection

- There are no streams or lakes abutting or within a harvest unit.
- Known surface waters and protection measures are described in Table 3 below. *Locations are included in the operational map in the Appendices.*

Table 3. Protection for Known Surface Waters

Unit	Waterbody Name	AS 41.17.950 Classification	ADF&G AWC #	Required Riparian Protection	Site-specific actions to minimize impacts on riparian area
1	Hamlin/Buggy Creek	Cataloged Anadromous	103-90-10610	100 FT	Retain timber per AS 41.17.118(a)1(A) and (B)
1	None	Tributary to Anadromous <12%	(none) Tributary to 103-90-10610	Follow Best Management Practices (BMPS)	Split yarding, directional felling, removal of logging debris from waters, site specific crossing approval of DOF.
1,2,3	None	Surface Water	None	Follow Best Management Practices (BMPS)	Split yarding, directional felling, removal of logging debris from waters

Surface waters listed above were reviewed by the Department of Fish and Game:

- During the timber sale planning process
- During the agency review conducted for the Best Interest Finding for this sale
- During the drafting of this Forest Land Use Plan
- Stream Crossings (Title 16) Permits are needed per ADF&G Division of Habitat

Surface waters listed above were reviewed by the Department of Environmental Conservation:

- During the timber sale planning process
- During the agency review conducted for the Best Interest Finding for this sale
- During the drafting of this Forest Land Use Plan

Non-classified surface waters are subject to applicable BMPs in 11 AAC 95.

Notes: See above.

G. Wildlife Habitat

- Wildlife species and allowances for their important habitats were addressed in writing by the Department of Fish & Game during the Best Interest Finding review.
- Wildlife species and allowances for their important habitats were addressed in writing by the Department of Fish & Game during the drafting of this Forest Land Use Plan.

Silvicultural practices to be applied to minimize impacts to wildlife habitat or wildlife management:

- Timber retention - concentrations of timber surrounding harvest units, or interspersed within harvest units to provide cover.
- Snag Retention- snags or isolated trees left for cavity nesting species.
- Large Woody Debris – concentrations of downed timber or logging debris interspersed within harvest units to provide cover left on site.

Other actions

Notes: Snag Retention will be applied only when practical to prevent unnecessary hazard trees around operations.

H. Cultural and Historical Resource Protection

- This project was reviewed by the State Historic and Preservation Office (SHPO).
- No artifacts have been reported within the project area(s).
- Known or likely sites have been identified and a mitigation plan is in place. (Describe the mitigation actions.)

I. Other Resources Affected by Timber Harvest and Management

- There are other resources and areas of concern besides surface water, fish habitat, and wildlife habitat that may be affected. Mitigations actions were addressed in the Best Interest Finding.

Table 4. Other Affected Resources / Areas of Concern

Impacted Resource	Reviewing Agency	Impact/ Mitigation Actions
Viewshed	DOF	None

- There are no affected resources or areas of concern other than surface water, fish habitat, and wildlife habitat, which are addressed in this Forest Land Use Plan.

J. Reforestation

Harvest type as it relates to reforestation requirement:

- Clearcut

Notes: Even-aged management

- Region I: Partial Harvest leaving more than 50% live basal area (11 AAC 95.375(b)(3))
- Region II or III: Partial Harvest relying on residual trees to result in a stocking level that meets standards of 11 AAC 95.375(b)(4).

Season of harvest:

- Winter harvest only
- Non-winter harvest only
- All-season harvest

Regeneration type:

Natural regeneration

List species: Sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*), western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*), western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*), and Alaska yellow cedar (*Chamaecyparis nootkatensis*).

Coppice

Artificial regeneration

Seeding: Species and source of seed (general vicinity location of seed source)

Planting: Species: _____ Date of proposed planting: _____

Source of seedlings (location of seed source): _____

IV. Roads and Crossing Structures

A. Road Design, Construction, and Maintenance

Roads will be designed, constructed, and maintained to prevent significant adverse impacts on water quality and fish habitat (AS 41.17.060(b)(5)), and site productivity (AS 41.17.060(c)(5)). Roads will comply with the best management practices in the Forest Resources and Practices Regulations (11 AAC 95.285 – 95.335). All roads used in this timber sale will conform at a minimum to the Division of Forestry Road Standards, site specific design may supersede this standard and will typically specified and applied through the timber sale contract.

Roads or other means required for the access and removal of this timber from the harvest area(s) or unit(s) are listed in Table 5A and 5B.

Table 5A. Road Reconstruction and Use

Road ID	Segment	Harvest Unit	Mile/ Station **	Road Class	Constructed and Maintained By	Construction Objective
1525000	A	All	0.11	Existing	Purchaser	Reestablish maintainable surface, drainage and clearing limits
1525000	B	All	0.38	Site Specific DOF Design.	Purchaser	Widen road surface and lower grade to the extent feasible, establish a maintainable surface, drainage and clearing limits

Road ID	Segment	Harvest Unit	Mile/ Station **	Road Class	Constructed and Maintained By	Construction Objective
1525000	C	All	0.61	Site Specific DOF Design.	Purchaser	Reestablish maintainable surface, drainage, and clearing limits

Table 5B. New Road Construction and Use

Road ID	Segment	Harvest Unit	Mile/ Station **	Road Class	Maximum Grade %	Constructed By	Maintained By
1525000-100	10,20,30, 40,50	1-1, 2-1, 2-2, 2-3, 3-1	1.31	Primary	12	Purchaser	Purchaser
1525000-110	10	1-1	0.11	Secondary	12	Purchaser	Purchaser
1525000-120	10	2-3, 4-2	0.15	Secondary	12	Purchaser	Purchaser

Road Class is as defined in the DOF Road Standards.

*Note: Roads must be less than 20% grade per 8 AAC 61.1060 Additional Logging Standards.

** One station equals 100 feet. One mile equals 5,280 feet.

Notes:

B. Road Erosion / Mass Wasting

Maximum percent side slopes of roads: 40%

- Maximum percent side slopes are ≤50%
- Maximum percent side slopes are >50%
 - There are no indicators of unstable areas where roads will be constructed.
 - Indicators of unstable areas were identified and will be mitigated by actions indicated below:

Table 6. Road Erosion Control Risk and Mitigation

Road ID	Segment	Mile/ Station or Point Label	Identified Erosion Risk	Risk Level	Mitigation
All	--	--	None	Low	Closure end of harvest (waterbars, cross drains)

C. Crossing Structures

Are you removing or replacing drainage structures? YES NO

- Replace existing drainage structure (18" CMP) at the west end of 15250000-Segment B. with an 18"CPP.

No crossing structures are needed within the project area.

Crossing structures will be placed in access roads as described in the table below:

Table 7. Required Drainage and Crossing Structures on Known Surface Waters

Road ID	Segment	Mile/ Station or Point Label	Bridge Length (ft.) or Culvert Diameter (in.)	Structure Type	AS 41.17.950 Stream Classification	ADF&G AWC Number	Duration of crossing structure in place
1525000-100	40	T517	18 IN	Corrugated Plastic Pipe (CPP)	Surface Water	None	End of sale
1525000-100	40	T518	36 IN	Log Culvert (LC)	Surface Water	None	End of sale

D. Road Closure

Roads constructed for the timber sale that are left open will be subject to maintenance standards under 11 AAC 95. 315. Otherwise, roads constructed for the timber sale will be closed, subject to standards under 11 AAC 95.320.

Table 8. Road Closures

Road ID	Segment	Unit	Closure Type All Season/Winter	Estimated Closure Date	Projected Road Use after Timber Harvest
1525000	A,B,C	NA	None	None	Public Access
1525000-100	10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60	1-1, 2-1, 2-2, 2-3, 3-1	All	To Be Determined.	Firewood Harvest, Silviculture
1525000-110	10	1-1	All	End of Harvest	Silviculture
1525000-120	10	2-3, 4-2	All	End of Harvest	Silviculture

E. Material Extraction

- There will be no material extraction sites in the project area.
- Material extraction and associated overburden disposal will be located outside of riparian areas and muskegs. Material extraction and disposal will be in a manner that prevents runoff from entering surface waters. All material sites will require the submittal of site plans and prior approval of the DOF.
- Other:

F. Other Resources Affected by Roads or Material Extraction

List resources other than water, habitat or cultural resources potentially impacted by road construction, and indicate how impacts will be mitigated. Other affected resources could be, but are not limited to mining claims, scenic areas, recreational trails, etc.

Table 9. Other Affected Resources

Impacted Resource	Reviewing Agency	Impact / Mitigation Actions
1525000 Road Public Safety	DOF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide adequate sight distance and space for passing or two-way vehicle traffic. • Sign traffic area and communicate plans to users. Control purchaser vehicle speeds in contract based on conditions.

V. Approvals

This Draft Forest Land Use Plan has been reviewed by the Division of Forestry & Fire Protection and provides the information necessary for public and agency review of the project described in this document.

Area Forester

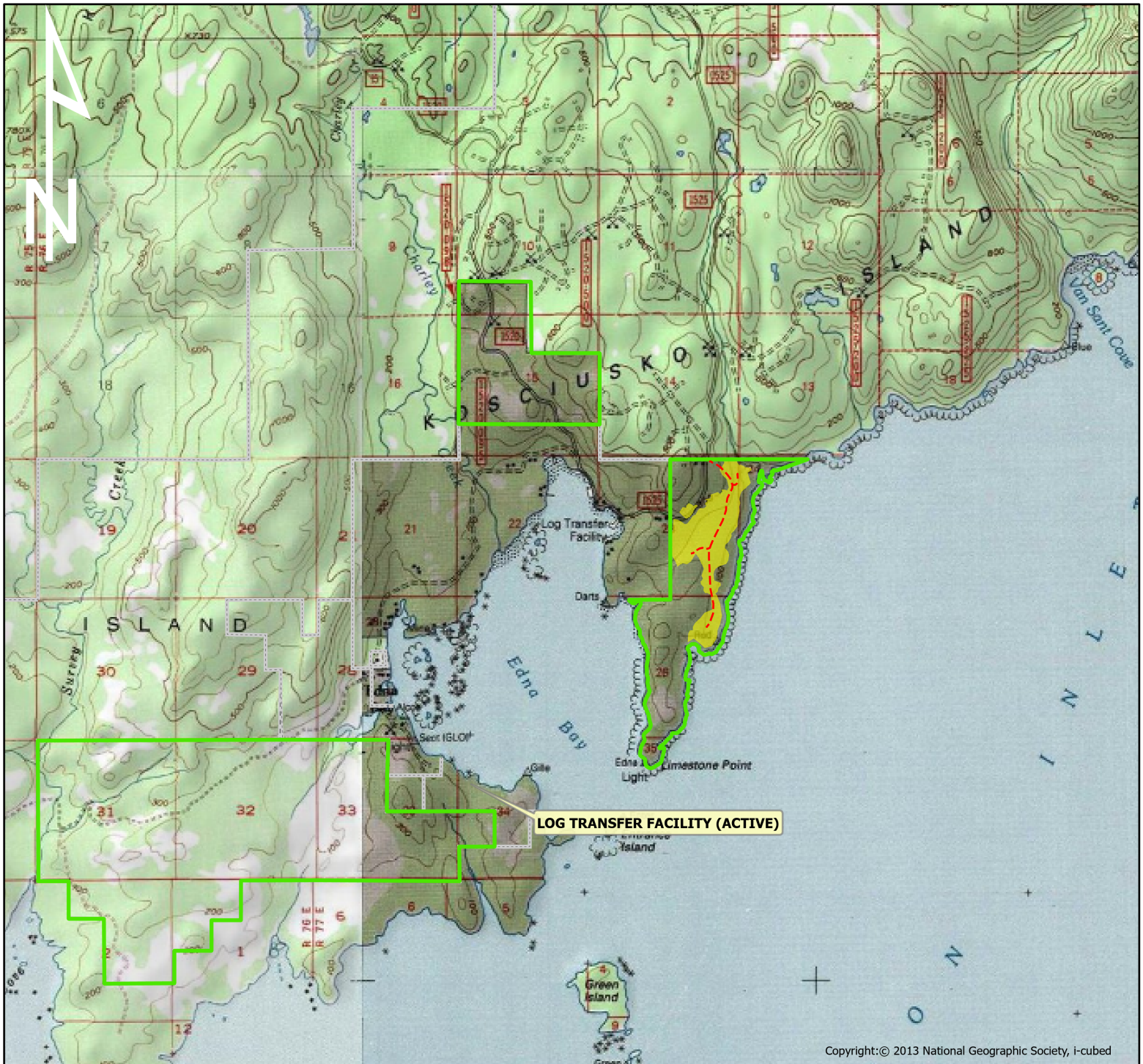
Date

If you have any questions, please contact the Southeast Area Office at (907) 225-3070 or e-mail dnr.dof.sse@alaska.gov.

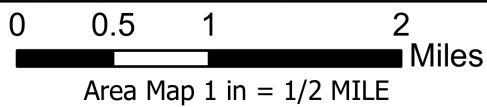
Appendix A: Timber Sale Maps

Appendix A1 Vicinity Map (1 page)

Appendix A2 Unit Maps (3 pages)

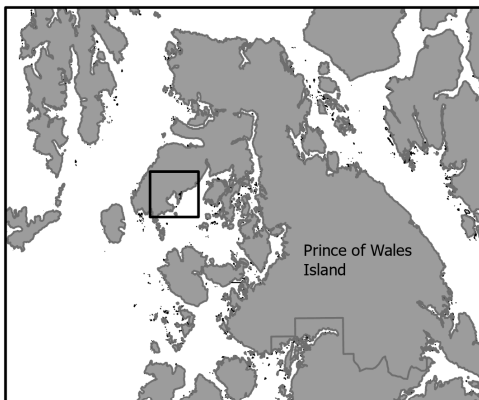


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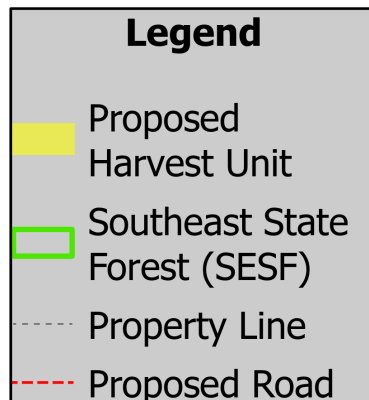


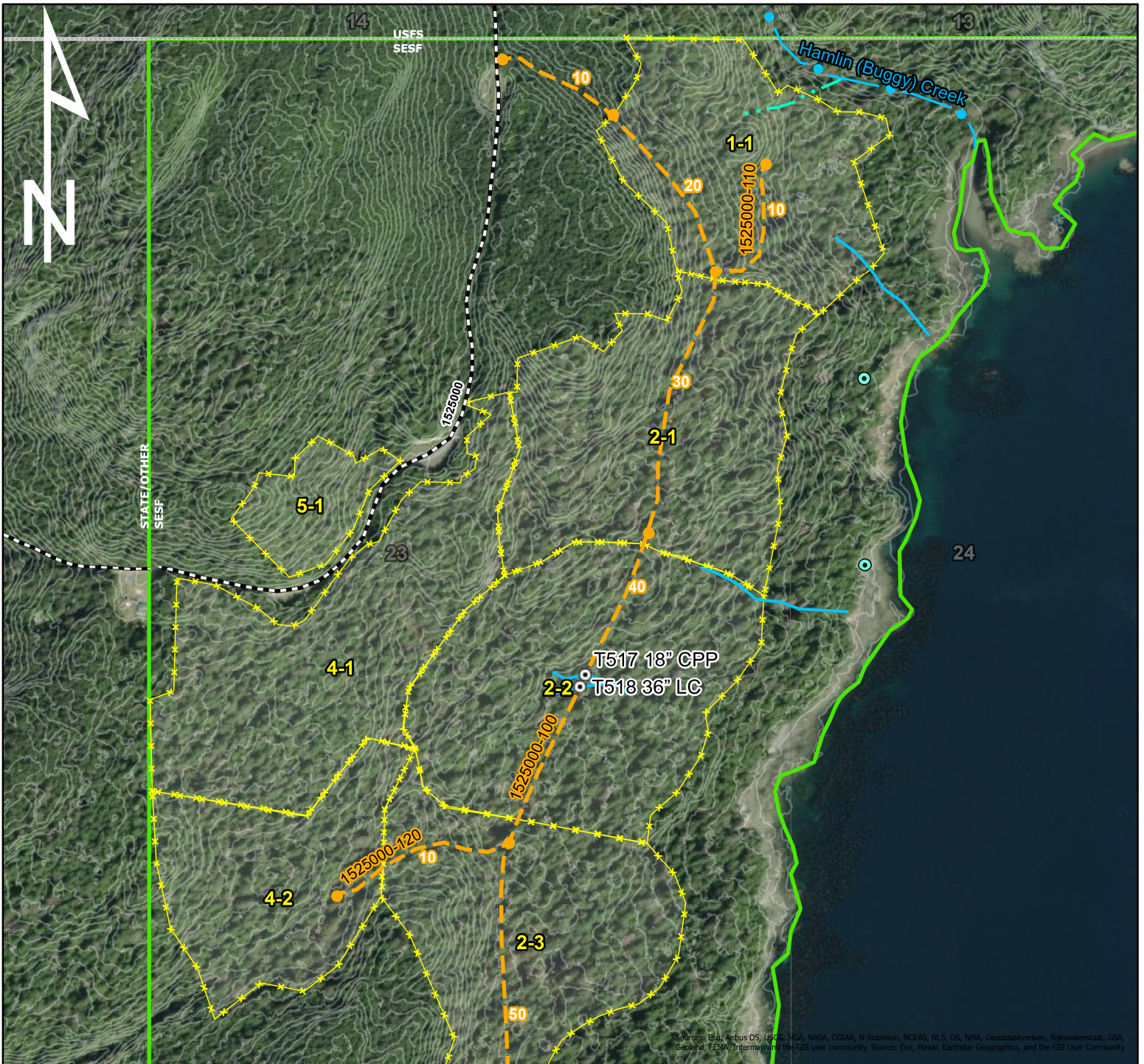
T68S R76E, Section(s) 23, 24, 26
Copper River Meridian

**APPENDIX A1
SSE-1384-K
KOSCIUSKO EAST
TIMBER SALE
AREA MAP**



Vicinity Map 1 in = 32 miles





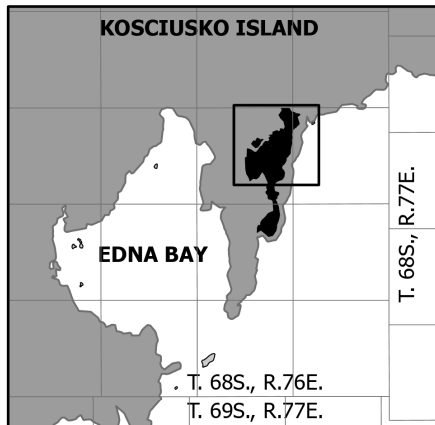
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T68S R76E, Section(s) 23,24,26
Copper River Meridian

Contour Interval = 10 FT
Source: USFS LiDAR 2018

Sale Map 1 in = 500 FT

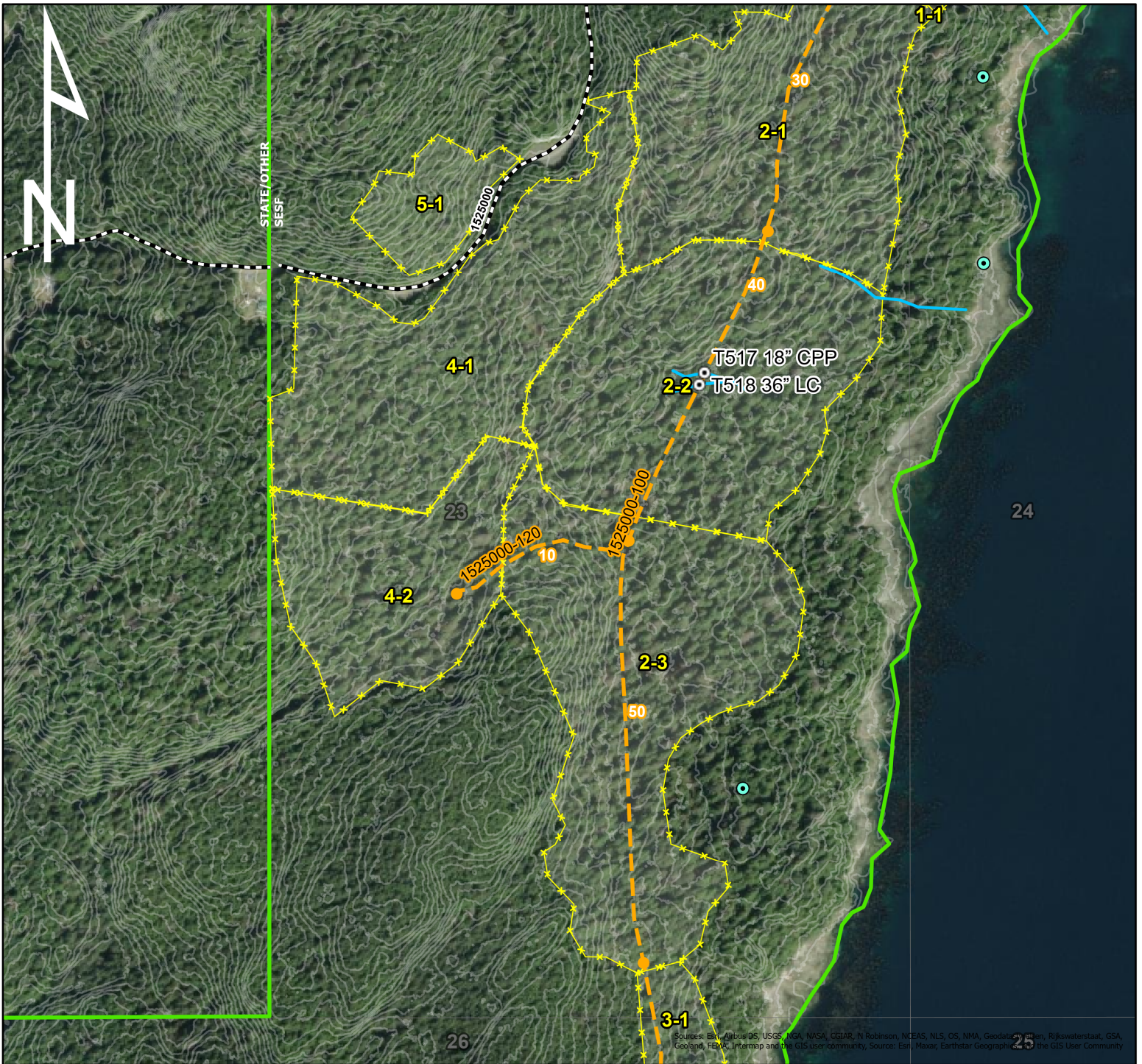


Vicinity Map 1 in = 2 miles

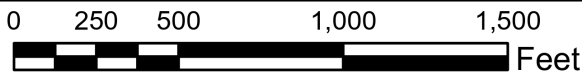
Legend			
	Proposed Harvest, Unit-Setting		Proposed Drainage Structure
	Southeast State Forest (SESF)		Cataloged Anadromous
	Property Line		Surface Water
	Existing Road		Tributary to Anadromous <12%
	Proposed Road		Eagle Nest (USFWS)

APPENDIX A2 SSE-1384-K KOSCIUSKO EAST TIMBER SALE MAP 1





Sources: Esri, Airbus DS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatenzentrum, Rijkswaterstaat, GSA, GeoLand, FEMA, Intermap and the GIS User community, Source: Esri, Maxar, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User Community

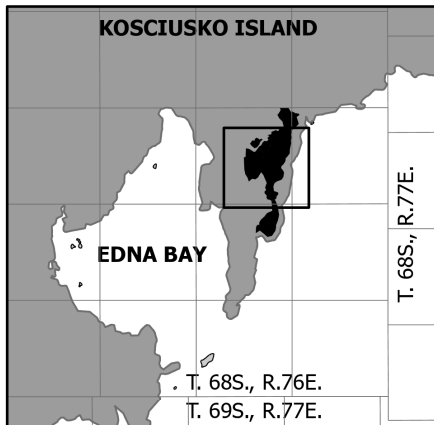


T68S R76E, Section(s) 23,24,26
Copper River Meridian

Contour Interval = 10 FT
Source: USFS LiDAR 2018

Sale Map 1 in = 500 FT

**APPENDIX A2
SSE-1384-K
KOSCIUSKO EAST
TIMBER SALE
MAP 2**



Vicinity Map 1 in = 2 miles

Legend			
	Proposed Harvest, Unit-Setting		Proposed Drainage Structure
	Southeast State Forest (SESF)		Cataloged Anadromous
	Property Line		Surface Water
	Existing Road		Tributary to Anadromous <12%
	Proposed Road		Eagle Nest (USFWS)





Sources: Esri, Airbus DS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatasysteisen, Rijkswaterstaat, GSA, Geoland, FEMA, Intermap and the GIS user community, Sources: Esri, Maxar, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User Community

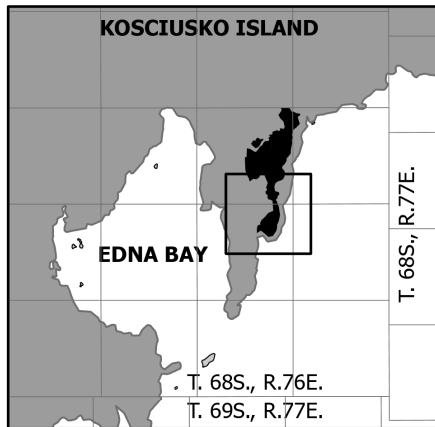


Sale Map 1 in = 500 FT

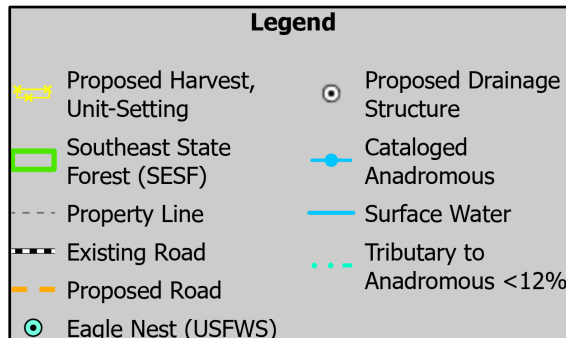
T68S R76E, Section(s) 23,24,26
Copper River Meridian

Contour Interval = 10 FT
Source: USFS LiDAR 2018

**APPENDIX A2
SSE-1384-K
KOSCIUSKO EAST
TIMBER SALE
MAP 3**



Vicinity Map 1 in = 2 miles



Appendix B: Supporting Information

Note: Silvicultural and stand information has also been described in the BIF.

Alaska Forest Practices and Regulations.

<http://forestry.alaska.gov/forestpractices>

Forest Road Standards.

http://forestry.alaska.gov/Assets/pdfs/resources/forest_road_standard_design_20151231.pdf

Appendix C: Public and Agency Comments and Responses [RESERVED]

Appendix D. Appeal and Request for Reconsideration Regulations
[RESERVED]