

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



Coastal Region-Southeast Area Office

**Preliminary Best Interest Finding
and
Forest Land Use Plan**

**Heceta Timber Sale
SSE-1357-K**

May 2026

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
DFFP	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
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

Table of Contents

I.	PROPOSED ACTION	4
II.	STATUTORY AND REGULATORY AUTHORITY	4
III.	ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD	4
IV.	SCOPE OF DECISION	4
V.	PROJECT LOCATION, LAND STATUS, AND DESCRIPTION	6
VI.	PUBLIC REVIEW	18
VII.	PUBLIC NOTICE.....	18
VIII.	RECOMMENDATION AND PRELIMINARY DECISION	19
IX.	SIGNATURE.....	19
X.	APPENDICES	20
Appendix A	SSE-1357-K Heceta Timber Sale Area Map	21
Appendix B	References.....	22
Appendix C	Appeal and Request for Reconsideration Regulations (reserved)	24
Appendix D	SSE-1357-K Heceta Timber Sale Comments & Responses (reserved).....	25
Appendix E	SSE-1357-K Heceta Timber Sale Forest Land Use Plan.....	26

I. PROPOSED ACTION

The Division of Forestry and Fire Protection (DFFP) is proposing to offer for sale approximately 183 acres of mature old growth and young growth composed of western hemlock, Sitka spruce, and western red cedar from State Forest and state lands on Heceta Island approximately 12 miles southwest of the community of Naukati on Prince of Wales Island (see Appendix A, Timber Sale Area Map). The volume to be offered totals approximately 6,500 thousand board feet (MBF). The DFFP proposes to sell the commercial timber in one sale under provisions of AS 38.05.120 as a competitive sale. The sale is noticed as required by AS 38.05.945 and the sale authority prior to being sold.

Selling the timber in an open and competitive manner using the AS 38.05.120 authority in Southeast Alaska will likely generate a stumpage revenue to the State. Purchasers of competitive sales typically use the round log export market and obtain higher returns on their investment. Most of this sale is a mixed age stand with some distinct pockets of young growth timber where previous timber harvest occurred in the early part of the last century.

The management objectives for the proposed timber sale area 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 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 in Southeast Alaska due to the combination of 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 DFFP's Southeast Area Office filed as SSE-1357-K.

IV. SCOPE OF DECISION

This preliminary best interest finding (BIF) is part three and four of a six-part process to design, sell, and administer timber sales. This BIF covers the sale of approximately 183 acres of a mix of mature old growth forest and young growth composed of western hemlock, Sitka spruce and western red cedar on State land within the perimeter of the 3,065-acre State ownership and project area (see Appendix A, Timber Sale Area Map). 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 area in this BIF is covered by the Subunit 10a- Heceta Island in the Prince of Wales Island Area Plan (POWIAP) and the Heceta Unit of the Southeast State Forest Management Plan (SESFMP).

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 location, volume, and main access routes. The FYSTS is a scoping document that provides an opportunity for public, agency, and industry to identify potential issues and areas of interest for further consideration in the BIF. Under AS 38.05.113, proposed timber sales within the area covered by this BIF must appear in at least one of the two FYSTSs preceding the sale. This timber sale area has been identified in the FYSTS 2026-2030.

Part 3: Best Interest Finding (AS 38.05.035(e)). DFFP 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 DFFP must adopt a site-specific Forest Land Use Plan (FLUP) for the harvest area. DFFP has prepared draft FLUPs for the harvest area within the overall sale area covered by this best interest finding. The 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 construction and maintenance, reforestation, and multiple use management. The FLUP is based on field work and site-specific analyses by the DFFP. Appropriate regulatory agencies have been consulted, and the plan is subject to public review. The DFFP since 2015 has generally separated the BIF and FLUP in order to manage the field work load. In this particular case the information for the draft FLUP has been accumulated over several years of activity in the area and is presented simultaneously with the BIF.

Part 5: Timber Sales and Contracts. Following adoption of the BIF, the DFFP may offer the timber for sale using the identified authority. The Division will sign a contract with the purchaser for each sale. The contract will include stipulations to ensure compliance with the BIF, FLUP, and statutory requirements.

Part 6: Sale Administration. DFFP 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 centered on the Camp Cove area of Heceta Island. The timber sale area is found within Sections 7, 8, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, and 27 of Township (T) 70S South(S), Range (R) 78 East (E), and Sections 12, 13, 23 and 24 of T70S, R77E all referenced to the Copper River Meridian (CRM). The sale area is found within the Craig C-5 USGS quadrangle. General access to the sale area is by the USFS 1445 Road which is connected to the log transfer facility at Port Alice and the Camp Cove public dock, both of which are owned and maintained by the United States Forest Service (USFS). See attached map titled: Appendix A1, SSE-1357-K Heceta Timber Sale Harvest Area Map.

B. Title status

The sale area land was granted to the State through National Forest Community Grant 350. Most of the area was designated State Forest in 2010 and 2011 by the State legislature.

C. Land use planning, classification, and management intent

The whole harvest area is within the geographic region covered by the POWIAP with the majority of the area also covered by the SESFMP. The western proposed harvest area, 83 acres, is on lands classified as General Use and is within the geographic region covered by the Prince of Wales Island Area Plan (POWIAP). Specifically, the harvest area is within subunit 10a and the management intent and guidelines for this area can be found beginning on page 148 of the area plan. The general and specific management intent for the General Use land of this area is excerpted as follows:

MANAGEMENT INTENT AND GUIDELINES

State lands in this subunit will be managed for multiple use. State tidelands and submerged lands at Port Alice will continue to be managed for upland timber harvest support facilities. Timber harvest support activities will not be allowed in the area near Camp Island. Continued use of Camp Island for access from the water to the island's road system will be allowed. Uplands in this subunit will be managed for general use, including timber harvest, habitat and wildlife conservation, and eventual community development. No residential land disposals are planned during the life of this plan. If disposals occur in the future, residential development should avoid damage to cultural resource sites and wildlife habitats. State lands will also be managed to protect the most important recreation and fish and wildlife habitat and harvest areas. All state lands are open to mineral entry.

FORESTRY

Resource Information:

Heceta Island has had extensive timber harvest. Other forestry activities have occurred near Camp Island. The log transfer facility at Port Alice (Site 10.01 LT) is authorized until 2008 for continued timber harvest activities. Commercial forest resources occur at various sites throughout the subunit.

Management Intent:

Heceta Island's developed road system enables log transfer activities to be concentrated at Port Alice. Management intent on Heceta Island is to concentrate log transfer facilities at Port Alice because of conflicts with community development at Camp Island and to consolidate facilities. Development of additional log transfer facilities in Port Alice may be necessary to meet this management intent.

A log transfer site previously used on Heceta Island near Camp Island will not be reactivated.

However, the U.S. Forest Service will retain an access float adjacent to the state selection. State tidelands and submerged lands designated “F” (Forestry) will be managed to support timber harvest activities consistent with other co-primary designations. Timber harvest is an appropriate use in areas designated “Gu” (General Use), subject to the stipulations of this plan and any imposed as a result of the Forest Land Use Plan planning process. Harvest cut units should be sited at least 100 feet from areas designated “S” (Settlement) or “P” (Public). Timber harvest may only occur within upland areas designated “Rd” (Public Recreation - Developed) adjacent to Warm Chuck Inlet if it can be demonstrated that such harvest activity can be made compatible with the identified recreation, wildlife, and fish resources.

The eastern proposed harvest area, 102 acres, is within the legislatively designated Southeast State Forest (SESF). The primary purpose for the legislatively designated Southeast State Forest is timber management (AS 41.17.200); provisions of area plans do not apply within legislatively designated areas such as state forests. The SESFMP was adopted on February 29, 2016.

“AS 41.17.200. State forest purposes and management. (a) The purpose of AS 41.17.200 - 41.17.230 is to permit the establishment of designated state-owned or acquired land and water areas as state forests. The primary purpose in the establishment of state forests is timber management that provides for the production, utilization, and replenishment of timber resources while allowing other beneficial uses of public land and resources.

(b) In managing a state forest, the commissioner shall, consistent with the primary purpose of a state forest under (a) of this section, restrict the public use of the land and its resources, including timber, fish and wildlife, and minerals, only when necessary to carry out the purposes of this chapter.”

D. Current access and land use

Most public upland access to the island occurs through either the USFS Port Alice log transfer site or the USFS Camp Cove public dock. No permanent communities or settlements are located on Heceta Island.

A seasonally operated floating fishing lodge has operated for several decades in a small bight on State tidelands in the NW ¼ of Section 20.

The public uses of the uplands are associated with semi-remote recreation such as but not limited to berry picking, trapping and hunting.

The only adjacent landowner is the USFS which manages 85% of the island. The USFS has conducted timber harvest operations at various times on federal lands since the mid-1940s. The latest harvest occurred as a partial harvest of young growth to the west of the Warm Chuck in 2015 and 2016.

The State created the Southeast State Forest in 2010 and 2011 from lands previously classified General Use; one of these areas is located on Heceta Island and a portion of the proposed sale is in the SESF. The DFFP conducted a young growth timber sale in 2015 on approximately 139 acres in Sections 19, 20 and 30 to coincide with other USFS sale activity on the island and market availability.

E. Background and description of proposal

1. Background:

The demand for State timber is currently unprecedented due to the decrease and uncertainty of the federal timber supply. A diversified economy with a timber industry component has traditionally been important to southeast Alaska due to the extensive forests, its isolation and numerous economic benefits. By direction from the Governor and Legislature, the Division of Forestry and Fire Protection manages a timber sale program that makes timber volume on State land available to help sustain the region's timber industry and economy.

The Heceta unit is adjacent to recent operations at Kosciusko Island on USFS and State land. It is also proximate to current activity on Tuxekan Island and can be supported by the infrastructure of Prince of Wales Island. Economies of scale and proximity to community infrastructure support generally provide a stronger business model than independent operations removed from infrastructure.

DNR has recognized the potential of the area and been planning for a timber sale proximate to these two units since the land was patented to the state. Efforts have been shelved several times due to factors associated with staff availability, resource knowledge, access authorization, and market conditions. The DFFP has illustrated different access and unit sizes in its FYSTS for over a decade. Throughout this time there has been increasing State interest in accessing the units from federal land because of the topography and site-specific resources on state land that precluded activity associated with timber operations. It is the current assessment that access from federal land would be cost effective and have less overall impact on non-timber resources in the area. Previous federal administrations did not provide the administrative flexibility to evaluate an access request. In 2025, the USFS revisited the DFFP request for access via the construction of short spurs from existing federal roads. The USFS Thome Bay Ranger District completed NEPA for the Heceta Island East unit and West Alaska State Timber unit access spurs on March 3, 2026, with two categorical exclusions (CE): Heceta Island West State Access Project and Heceta Island East State Access Project. The Forest Service has drafted road use and special use permits to authorize the use and construction of the roads included within these 2 CEs. The proposed State timber sale described in this document is based on the intended federal access authorization that would be issued in the form of a permit to the potential timber purchaser.

2. Timber Volume and Sustained Yield:

The total estimated sawlog volume identified in the sale area is 6,500 MBF using the Atterbury Cruise System.

The Division of Forestry and Fire Protection is required to manage its timber harvest on State Forest and General Use classified 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 output over a ten-year period. This is done to allow for market fluctuations and operational restrictions. Based on the DFFP inventory of the land and the timber base, it uses an annual allowable cut of 9,100 MBF per year for the Southern Southeast Area. Timber sales that are sold in the Southeast Area will remain within the constraints of the allowable cut and will comply with sustained yield requirements at the time they are sold. The duration of the timber sale contract(s) will be governed by the economic conditions at the time of the sale. This timber sale is well within the annual allowable cut for forest managed state land.

3. Harvest Unit Design:

All harvest sale area units are designed for clear-cut harvest. Reconnaissance by the DFFP indicates that the sale units are harvestable using ground-based (shovel) logging techniques. This logging system will need to take advantage of directional timber falling techniques and utilize benches on uneven terrain to access all timber included. Areas of wet and saturated soil will require adequate puncheon in skid trails to minimize impacts to the soil and water quality. Where skid trails are established, soil integrity and soil compaction will be monitored to maintain existing site capacity or improve existing conditions for tree growth. Adjacent residual tree conditions will likewise be maintained with the intent to not significantly diminish young growth stands currently regenerating.

Retention buffers are planned around the coastal beach area to support wildlife management objectives and avoid documented cultural resources. One bald eagle nest tree was identified using the federal database and is in this shoreside retention area.

DFFP foresters performed field reconnaissance and layout activities for the proposed timber sale in 2004, 2016 and again during the Spring of 2026. The work confirmed and examined timber types, potential road access, geology, soils, hydrology, cultural resource potential, and fish and wildlife use within the proposed sale area.

4. Unit Access:

Road access design, construction, and maintenance will comply with the Forest Resources and Practices regulations (11 AAC 95.285-.355).

Unit 2:

The DFFP examined five different access routes into Unit 2 of which three required authorizations from the USFS. The final route chosen contains the least amount of road length and uses the existing 1445310 road and an existing temporary road from which a new spur road access is proposed to be constructed across a 40-year-old clearcut on federal land. The alternate routes were investigated based on consideration of a range of resource factors by state and federal agencies. Based on the multi-agency scoping, the resulting Unit 2 constraints are to:

- avoided cataloged stream 103-90-10470 riparian habitat,
- avoid known and likely cultural resource areas,
- avoid important karst features on federal land, and
- avoid site-specific wildlife habitat identified on federal and state land.

Unit 1:

The DFFP examined two alternatives for access into Unit 1. The first route considered was entirely on State land and proposed a series of switchbacks to climb from the 1445000 road to the south side of the unit. This route is approximately 1,000 feet longer than the preferred route on USFS land and crosses a relatively wet forested area. The preferred route requires only 500 feet of new construction on USFS land to access the state property line and the unit. The preferred access route entails the use of an existing temporary spur road tributary to the existing 1445500 road and would cross the western lobe of the Crooked Hook Unit #1 of the Heceta Commercial Thinning Project harvested in 2016. The route chosen avoids the USFS mapped karst features and generally follows an existing skid trail used in the 2016 harvest.

To maintain water quality during road construction, the Division of Forestry and Fire Protection will implement FRPA's Best Management Practices (BMP); specific BMPs that need to be emphasized for site specific issues. The size and location of the drainage structures are specified in the FLUP.

The units in general had very little surface water. The underlying bedrock composed primarily of limestone shows in overturned tree stumps and is well fractured, facilitating good subsurface drainage. Unit 1 notably had very little surface water evident. Relief culverts and ditches have been budgeted and are required to manage existing and developed surface flow that reaches the road prism. The forest road will likely alter some drainage patterns. Properly constructed forest roads typically pass most water under them and do not significantly alter drainage patterns. Forest roads generally minimize ground disturbance through location and the use of slash and debris to "float" the rock surface on top of the mineral soil. Obvious subsurface conveyances (karst) encountered during construction will be stabilized to minimize and mitigate sediment and debris movement.

To keep the potential for soil erosion to a minimum, the amount of road construction has been minimized on steep slopes that require more rock and earthwork. The roads have been designed to follow the natural contours and benches as much as practical and are generally located on the more moderate slopes. Shovel logging landings are typically distributed along the roads. Where topography funnels activity, best management practices will be implemented to minimize soil compaction or disturbance, the concentration of water, and potential movement of soil. To minimize the potential for erosion, FRPA road construction, maintenance, and slope stability standards are included in timber sale contract and expected to be adhered to. The DFFP timber sale administrator will ensure, with frequent field inspections, compliance with the timber sale contract.

There is no anticipated public use of the road for firewood gathering because there are no communities on the island. Upon completion of the harvest activity the road will be conditioned for long term stability. Spur roads constructed in this sale will be closed to highway vehicles after harvest of timber to meet FRPA requirements and minimize unauthorized activities.

5. Appraisal Method: The DFFP will appraise the timber value in compliance with 11 AAC 71.092. The sale area will be appraised by using a residual value appraisal method. Selling values and extraction cost numbers 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 mixed age stands of western hemlock and Sitka spruce and with a minor component of western red cedar. These stands have a mix of timber ages that are a product of selective harvests and clearcuts done in the 1940's. The young growth is vigorous and approximately 70 years old except in pockets of Unit 1 where it has stagnated at the pole and chip and saw log size. Stem sizes in these stands overall are quite variable. The settings and yarding corridors were logged into saltwater using high lead methods to A-frames on the shore. This initial harvest was then followed by wind disturbances of residual stems and the edges likely accelerated from these initial stand openings. Even age stands of Sitka spruce are evident on the more productive sites harvested by clearcut. Where terrain and wood quality likely produced a selective harvest, wind disturbance generally has factored into the regeneration with the ages exhibiting more variability.

Regardless, the units have evidence of wind disturbance throughout due to shallow soil. Redcedar was generally avoided in the previous harvest and is dominant on the wetter sites on the south side of Unit 1 where it is of average quality. Some mortality is present in the western hemlock on the northeast facing aspects on each unit from past hemlock sawfly outbreaks.

b. Stand Silvics:

The adjacent timber stands are even-aged young growth timber, last harvested in the 1980s by the USFS prior to transfer of title to the State. These stands are on high site classes with similar site conditions, are growing vigorously and are in various degrees of the stem exclusion phase. The dominate stems emerging are pole class in size. Most of these stands on State land are beyond the typical size for cost effective precommercial thinning.

Stand improvement treatments such as pre-commercially thinning overly dense even age stands have historically occurred in the area by the USFS. The benefits of thinning are an overall decrease in tree density with an increase in tree growth rate and vigor for the residual stems. Secondary benefits to wildlife habitat opportunity can also be realized through thinning by decreasing the time the stand is in this dense stand structure that typically limits light into the understory. Precommercial thinning of the SESF area logged in 2015 is planned to occur approximately in 2040.

c. Reforestation and Site Preparation:

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 based on observations in the previous clearcuts. Experience with this regeneration method on POW has shown that well-stocked stands are readily established after utilizing the clearcut harvest method. Reforestation will be verified to be in compliance with the Forest Resources and Practices regulations (11 AAC 95.375-.390). The DFFP 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.

Logging will generally 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 survival by creating mineral soil access and micro relief. Shovel logging stands of similar age on Kosciusko and Tuxekan utilized whole tree yarding of the young growth and smaller old growth. Where this occurs in younger stands it tends to concentrate larger amounts of residual slash and pulp logs near roads. These concentrations appear to have the capability to inhibit stable regeneration that exceeds the FRPA minimums and overall create openings until the slash fully breaks down. Initial observations indicate this feature might better serve the State if it was managed for forest regeneration. Overall, the gaps caused by the slash and utility decks have not proven to be statistically significant. This harvest-imposed site variability may benefit wildlife preferring forest edge disturbance.

Sitka spruce and western redcedar are the preferred species for reforestation. Spruce and redcedar will likely be the favored and dominant species due to anticipated increase in available light, nutrients and scarification in the units during harvesting operations. Scarification disturbs the vegetative mat to expose mineral soil which in turn provides a more receptive seed bed. Western hemlock will be a major component of the regenerated stand as well since it currently occupies the site, is an aggressive shade tolerant pioneer species, and is providing a dominate 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 (AS 41.17.060(c)(5)).

The timber sale occupies an area with varied topography ranging from moderate slopes to areas of steep, broken, fissured, exposed limestone bluffs; no defined aspect predominates. Elevation ranges from 100 to 300 feet within the sale area. Most of the sale area has average slopes of less than 50 percent. Soil characteristics are generally described as a thin well-drained organic layer on fractured Heceta limestone base with occasionally deeper soil associated with postglacial deposits.

2. Wildlife habitat and harvest

As required by AS 41.17.098, DFFP provides due deference to ADF&G to ensure all wildlife habitat issues are addressed by the proposed timber sale design. AS 38.04.910(5)(A) implies that multiple use management means the “use of some land for less than all of the resources.” Section 41.17.060(c)(7) of the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act (AS 41.17) states that “allowance shall be made for important fish and wildlife habitat.”

Hunting and trapping do occur in the area. It is likely that human interaction with wildlife may occur due to the area’s proximity to the communities of Edna Bay, Naukati and Craig. The spur roads associated with the timber harvest will provide some additional access for human activities associated with wildlife. Added hunting pressure is not anticipated to be significant due to the small quantity of road added and the proximity of a much larger road network elsewhere on Heceta and POW and the effort needed to mobilize to Heceta Island. The change in availability of deer for wolf predation on Heceta associated with this harvest is minor. The reduction in deer availability or the population may be more noticeable for human harvest as the area regenerates to a second growth forest, thus diminishing areas with human access.

The sale is not expected to cause significant adverse impacts overall to the wildlife populations on Heceta or POW based on the area scoping information and the site-specific observations of its characteristics.

The portion of the sale on General Use classified land has been designed using guidelines and management intent from the Prince of Wales Island Area Plan (POWIAP) and the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act and Regulations (FRPA). The sale area was not identified as crucial habitat (Ha) or prime habitat (Hb) in the POWIAP.

The SESFMP on Page 64 indicated a known wolf den in the area. Consultation with ADFG during the planning process indicated it was not in or adjacent to the units.

The USF&W eagle tree database was consulted. Two documented nests are in Section 7 in the costal retention area of Unit 2. The tagged trees were recovered in 2004, but the tags were not recovered in 2026. Eagle activity was observed along the coast, but no nests were identified.

ADF&G in general on past sales has been requesting the retention of cedar snags where safety permits, to retain roosting potential for bats. This is typically implemented in State timber sales and is proposed here.

In the 2006 FYSTS the OHMP (now ADFG- Habitat) relayed observations from a collared deer study indicating that deer were documented using Unit 2 during winter conditions regardless of its observed minimal browse potential. Agency comment in the fall of 2002 as part of correspondence contributing to a proposed FLUP for the area, described the winter wolf kills as having indications of starvation. The area was noted at the time as being one of a limited number of stands of older timber on the north end of the island that provide wintering shelter during deep snow conditions, if not some food.

No areas of specific wildlife concern were indicated by ADF&G in the comments received for the 2013-2017, 2015-2019 or 2026-2030 FYSTS.

The combination of ADFG's characterized deer habitat importance in 2006, the two cataloged eagle trees, and cultural resource models and evidence in the area (discussed in more detail later in this document), lead the DFFP to retain approximately a 200 to 300-foot-band of timber next to the coast on the east side of Unit 2. This coastal retention area is connected to the riparian retention area along Rice Creek and the USFS ownership to the west.

Even with a total removal of timber (clear-cut) on State ground on Heceta, the effect on deer population capacity is not projected to significantly change because the island-wide habitat will not significantly change. Total removal of timber on State land is not happening. A reduction in deer habitat in the immediate area will likely result from the harvest of this timber. Deer numbers will remain approximately the same as the stand regenerates but will diminish as the understory is shaded out during mid-term regeneration at approximately 30 years of age. Consequently, the act of the harvest of timber may eventually lower the capacity of the immediate area for deer during the period of 30 to 65 years after harvest, after which the understory will gradually provide more long-term food capacity if left unharvested.

Most of the State land in the Camp Cove area of Heceta Island has been harvested at least once. Stands vary from recently clear-cut regeneration to stands with mature young growth with a developing to clear understory. Much of the area was harvested approximately 25 to 50 years ago. Many of these stands have been thinned and are into a second stem exclusion phase. Though these stands provide some winter cover they generally have limited browse potential other than along their edges and on roads sides, etc.

The proposed harvests and the recent change in the mix of forest stages on both State and federal land is projected to improve browse availability to deer in the area for several decades. This in turn should generally increase availability of deer for hunters. Wintering conditions during the period may negate this abundance though due a decrease in old growth forest cover.

Most of the project area is State Forest, the management intent of the forest is for the production of forest resources; it is likely that the timber will be harvested again at approximately 80 years of age. The western proposed unit is classified General Use land and is likewise designated for forest resource values unless a more defined use is determined through land planning.

Heceta Island has a total area of approximately 43,556 acres. Of these, 3,249 acres are State owned. The amount of land harvested prior to 2016 on all ownerships is approximately 15,407 acres. About 13,869 Acres were harvested between 26 and 55 years ago. The State Heceta timber sale is 7% of

State land and 0.5 % of the island. Most of the land on Heceta is owned by the USFS. About 20,989 acres or 48% of the island remains in productive old growth and approximately 6,734 acres or 15% is composed of bare rock, lakes and wetlands.¹

The USFS has reserved productive old growth timber (POG) for non-timber values (such as wildlife) in the 2016 Tongass Land Management Plan. In all plan alternatives, less than one percent of POG forest wide is projected to change in the next 100 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, DFFP provided due deference to ADF&G to ensure all fish and wildlife habitat issues are addressed by the proposed timber sale design. DFFP provides due deference to the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) for all water quality issues. ADFG Habitat Division has visited the site.

On May 1, 2002, a biologist with the ADF&G-Habitat office visited stream 103-90-10470 that flows adjacent to the western proposed harvest Unit #2. The purpose of the trip was to scope fish and wildlife resources. ADFG Habitat provided comments for a draft FLUP in the fall of 2002 describing the fish habitat and noted site vulnerability due the evident karst features at a proposed road crossing of stream 103-90-10470 on State land. ADFG requested that extreme caution be exercised during the development of the area and that a Fish Habitat Permit would be required for work in the “channel”. ADEC at the time reiterated the need to treat the area in a conservative manner to preserve the structure of the underlying karst and its flow characteristics. Due to market conditions and the need to determine the significance of historic indicators adjacent to the area, the 2002 FLUP was tabled.

As part of the Sustainable Salmon Fund work to map fish habitat on State Forest Land, ADFG Habitat worked in the area further documenting the extent of the upper reaches of the stream again in the summer of 2018. Though this work moved through the subject area it did not provide new information that had direct bearing on the fish habitat in the proximity of the proposed harvest unit. The DFFP has incorporated this ADF&G GIS stream data related to the cataloged anadromous and resident fish streams in the design of the sale.

Operations in and adjacent to cataloged anadromous stream 103-90-10470 have been completely avoided through the proposed access route across federal land to Unit 2. Most drainage in both units appears to be subsurface. Small surface water evidence is intermittent and was mapped in the southwest portion of Unit 2.

The underlying bedrock in both units is composed primarily of limestone and shows in overturned trees stumps. It is well fractured and facilitates good subsurface drainage. Unit 1 notably had no surface water other than on its southeast corner. The intent will be to avoid and maintain existing drainage patterns.

FRPA best management practices will be implemented to maintain bank and soil stability and water

¹ United States Forest Service, Heceta Commercial Thinning Study Environmental Assessment, Final E.A. and supplemental documents, ROD August 2004.

quality along all streams. It is standard practice on State timber sales to protect water quality of non-fish bearing water bodies through a combination of retention areas, directional felling, partial suspension of logs, split yarding, and removal of incidental logging debris (limbs, etc.) from stream channels.

4. Recreation, Tourism, and Scenic Resources.

There are no known commercial recreation operations that directly use the proposed sale area. The area is not known to have unique tourism values currently. The timber harvest will not be directly visible from the floating fishing lodge located in Section 20. Travelers to and from the lodge may notice the activity as part of the greater viewshed of the island.

Recreation in this part of the southeast Alaska is generally of a dispersed and remote nature tied closely to the existing road system and saltwater; use is occasional in nature for such things as hunting, trapping, berry picking, and wildlife viewing. These activities will be limited during active harvest operations. Past timber sales have provided road access for dispersed recreational opportunities, and this timber sale will provide similar access. This timber sale is expected to result in no changes to recreational or tourism use of the area. New road access may encourage subsequent hunting access but relative to the overall availability on Heceta and POW it will be a minor change. All the proposed roads are relatively short and dead end within the units. The roads will be water barred at the conclusion of the timber sale in a manner that will limit most highway vehicle use, which is rather limited regardless due to the island's separation from POW Island road system. ATV traffic will not be actively managed. Typically, unless cleared of alder by incidental users, the roadbeds will not be drivable by ATVs inside of fifteen years.

Due to topography and its location, the timber sale will be visually removed from saltwater and incidental to the surrounding landscape. The visual footprint from the air will match the adjacent forest landscape in approximately 10 years as the stand regenerates. Most of the island has had timber harvest, the nature of the viewshed change will be similar in scope.

5. Cultural Resources.

The DFFP 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 SHPO requested site review in 2002 prior to timber harvest of the area based on information and observations developed by USFS archeologists working in the area on federal projects. Funding and other operational priorities within the DFFP and SHPO precluded visiting the area until April of 2017. Unit 1 had no observed indicators and due to the topography was determined to have a low likelihood of containing culturally historic sites.

The western site on the other hand had associations of features (anadromous stream, protected shore-side, etc.) and information on file developed by the USFS that indicated historic use of the area. Previous observations in the area lacked geospatial reference on a scale and confidence to relate them to the proposed State unit. Consequently, the Alaska Archeology Survey Unit of the SHPO conducted a pedestrian survey of the western unit using more accurate geo-spatial tools (GPS) and refined information and observations based on several contemporary works on the subject. Previous indicators on file were determined to be outside the proposed unit.

The DFFP harvest methods proposed typically have limited ground disturbance associated with the harvest. Maintaining the integrity of the organic and vegetated mat categorically avoids historic evidence residing predominately in the soil layers. Activities such as road building though are the exception to this statement. The road location in this unit is removed from the documented sites and occupies a terraced ground that requires little modification of the organic layer other than the removal of stumps and the rearrangement of surface debris that is in turn covered with a layer of shot rock. Known resources are well removed from the road location. Harvest activities have also been designed to avoid potential impacts by the placement of the cutting boundaries and the intent to retain wind firm timber adjacent to the known sites. If additional archaeological sites are identified, operations and road locations will be appropriately adjusted to avoid conflicts. If any historic or archaeological sites are encountered during road construction or harvest activities, DFFP will immediately inform SHPO and take action to protect the findings.

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.

7. Residential Subdivision and Access.

The DMLW has scoped a residential subdivision in Section 17 that would have access planned to occur from saltwater. Access to that area is not related to this proposed timber sale. Timber sale Unit #2 is on General Use classified lands. Currently the DMLW has no immediate plans to develop this area. The best management practices of the FRPA encourage forest operations to develop the least amount of road for accessing timber. The DFFP believes that by choosing the proposed location it has met the intent of FRPA and likely accessed the area in a manner that is conducive to most likely future uses.

G. Costs and benefits

The DFFP will appraise the timber value in compliance with 11 AAC 71.092. The sale area will be appraised by 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.

The DFFP projects that it will need a large sale format in the proposed area to attract the capital to mobilize and access the site(s).

Access will be improved on State Forest land and General Use classified land for timber management which increases the long-term operational flexibility of the forest to meet its purpose.

Based on DFFP observations of the project area and historic markets, timber revenue is projected to cover administration, access and operating costs for this sale area and likely provide stumpage royalty to the State. The initial analysis of the costs of removal and the potential value of the timber indicate that the young growth hemlock and spruce timber will be exported in the round based on markets. There are currently limited domestic markets for this quantity of young growth but adequate interest from China. The larger old growth hemlock and spruce have several markets that have repeatable and high interest in

North America and on the Pacific Rim. The characteristics of the old growth wood have retained its value in these markets even with the overall decrease in volume available from the region. By making sales of this size available the markets that have been maintained are available for future applications.

While the DFFP encourages utilization of the timber resource by the timber purchaser, significant low-grade wood may be left because of the defect in the older wood and the smaller young growth stems that might be used for firewood in more accessible locations. The DFFP is not planning to leave the road systems open or inactive for firewood gathering due to the road system being isolated.

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 transportation, fuel, food, housing, medical and miscellaneous supplies. The DFFP, in similar timber sale formats, has in conjunction with other land managers in Southeast, been able to contribute to a diversified economy and supply needed jobs for more than 30 years. Demand for these sales has been steady even during times of stressed market conditions such as Covid-19, the 2021 tariff restrictions and the more recent China market hiatus in 2025.

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 DFFP Southeast Area Office **by 4:00 pm June 15, 2026**, to ensure consideration and review. Commenters are encouraged to confirm receipt of their comments by the DFFP prior to the submission deadline. Comments should be mailed to the State of Alaska, Division of Forestry and Fire Protection, 2417 Tongass Avenue, Ketchikan, Alaska 99901 or emailed to dnr.dof.sse@alaska.gov. For more information, please contact Area Forester 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 June 15, 2026**.

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 and Edna Bay Public Libraries. Mailed notices were distributed to a mailing list maintained by the Southeast Area

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 183 acres of mixed age timber composed of western hemlock, Sitka spruce, western redcedar, and Alaska yellow-cedar on General Use and Southeast State Forest land. Harvest activities on the Southeast State Forest lands will follow the management intent of the Southeast State Forest Plan. Activities on General Use lands will follow the management intent of the Prince of Wales Island Area Plan. The DFFP 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

Area Forester
Alaska Division of Forestry & Fire Protection

Date

X. APPENDICES

Appendix A SSE-1357-K Heceta Timber Sale Area Map

Appendix B References

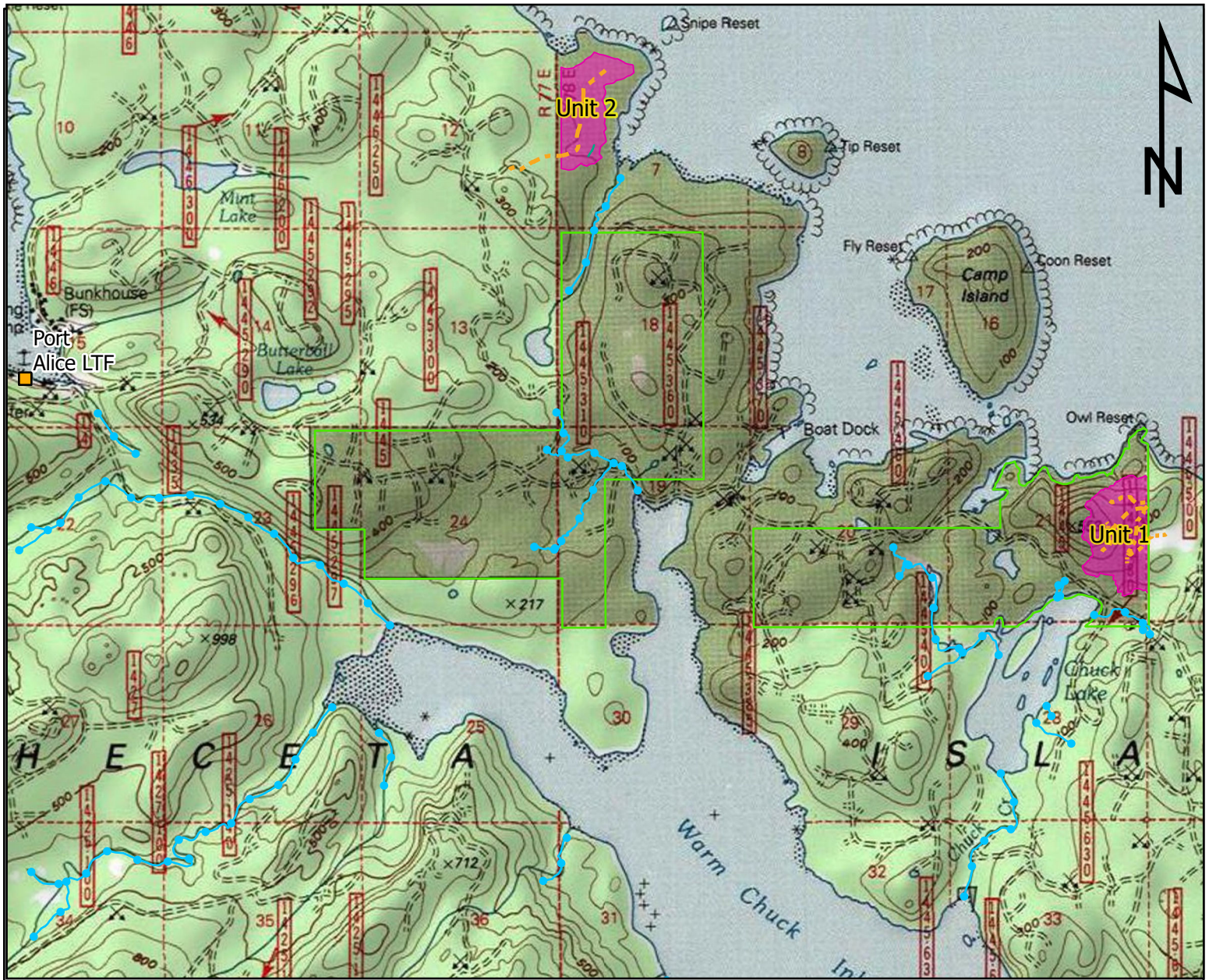
Appendix C Appeal Regulations (reserved)

Appendix D Comments & Responses (reserved)

Appendix E SSE-1357-K Heceta Forest Land Use Plan

Appendix A SSE-1357-K Heceta Timber Sale Area Map

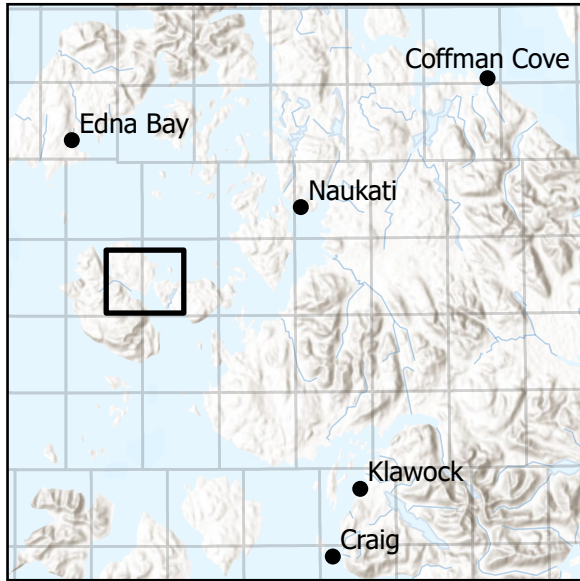
Vicinity Map (one page)



0 2,000 4,000 6,000 8,000 Feet
 1 IN = 4,000 feet







MTR: C070S077E & C070S077E

APPENDIX A1 SSE-1357-K HECETA TIMBER SALE AREA MAP



Vicinity Map: 1 IN = 15 miles

Legend

 Harvest Units	 Proposed Roads
 Southeast State Forest	 Cataloged Anadromous Stream
 Log Transfer Facility	 General Water Quality



Appendix B References

Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Fire Protection, 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 and Fire Protection, *Southeast State Forest Management Plan*, Adopted February 29, 2016. Maps and general information retrievable from: <http://forestry.alaska.gov/stateforests.htm>

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

Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Mining Land and Water, Land Administration System. Retrievable from: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/landrecords/>

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 Parks, Office of History and Archeology, personal communication with staff and AHRS database.

Area Wildlife Biologist(s), Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Wildlife, personal communications.

Baichtal, James, Forest Geologist (Retired), Tongass National Forest, Personal communication.

British Columbia Ministry of Forests, Forest Practices Branch, *Introduction to Silvicultural Systems*. Web site accessed at: <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfd/pubs/SSIntroworkbook/evenage.htm#patch>

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, Effective June 1, 2010. Retrievable from: <https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/SARR/AWC/index.cfm?ADFG=main.interactive>

District Ranger(s), Craig and Thorne Bay Ranger District(s), Tongass National Forest, Personal communication.

Donnelley, Shona, South Zone Supervisory Archaeologist, Tongass National Forest, Personal communication.

McCoy, Stan, Logging Systems Forester, Tongass National Forest, Personal communication.

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

S.E.R. Manager and staff, Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Mining, Land and Water, personal communication.

United States Forest Service, Region 10, Engineering Cost Guide. February 24, 2014.

United States Forest Service Geographic Information System Database.

United States Forest Service, Tongass Land Management Plan Amendment, Final E.I.S., June 2016.

United States Forest Service, Big Thorne Project, Final E.I.S. and supplemental documents, ROD June, 2013.

United States Forest Service, Heceta Commercial Thinning Study Environmental Assessment, Final E.A. and supplemental documents, ROD August 2004 and Heceta Salvage Project, CE Decision June 2018 and supporting documents. Web site accessed at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=53816>

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

Appendix C Appeal and Request for Reconsideration Regulations (reserved)

Appendix D SSE-1357-K Heceta Timber Sale Comments & Responses (reserved)

Appendix E SSE-1357-K Heceta Timber Sale Forest Land Use Plan

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



Coastal Region-Southeast Area Office
Draft Forest Land Use Plan

Heceta Timber Sale
SSE-1357-K

May 2026

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

Contents

I. Introduction.....	4
A. Legal description	5
B. Operational Period.....	5
C. Timber Disposal	5
II. Affected Land Owners/Jurisdictions	6
A. State.....	6
B. Other Land Interests	6
III. Harvest Methods, Silvicultural Actions, and Management of Non-timber Resources	6
A. Timber Stand Description and History	7
B. Timber Harvest Activities	7
C. Site Preparation	7
D. Slash Abatement.....	8
E. Soil Stability / Erosion / Mass Wasting.....	8
F. Timber Harvest—Surface Water Protection.....	8
G. Wildlife Habitat.....	9
H. Cultural and Historical Resource Protection.....	9
I. Other Resources Affected by Timber Harvest and Management	9
J. Reforestation.....	10
IV. Roads and Crossing Structures.....	11
A. Road Design, Construction, and Maintenance.....	11
B. Soil Erosion / Mass Wasting	12
C. Crossing Structures.....	12
D. Material Extraction.....	14
E. Other Resources Affected by Roads or Material Extraction.....	14
V. Approvals.....	15
Appendix A: Timber Sale Maps.....	16
Appendix B: Supporting Information.....	17

I. Introduction

Project File Number: SSE-1357-K

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

This Forest Land Use Plan (FLUP) covers proposed forest operations on approximately 183 acres of land from state lands on Heceta Island, approximately 12 miles southwest of the Community of Naukati on Prince of Wales Island. 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 Draft 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 decision on whether or not to offer timber for sale is made through the best interest finding process and is not subject to review under the FLUP. Objections or comments pertaining to the draft FLUP must be received in writing to the DFFP Southeast Area Forester's Office by **June 15, 2026** in order to ensure consideration for review. Comments should be mailed to the State of Alaska, Division of Forestry & 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 participate in any appeal or request for reconsideration to the final decision, a person must be affected by the decision and must have submitted comment to the preliminary decision during the comment period.

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 or public hearing testimony 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 and Practices Act
- Southeast State Forest Management Plan
- Prince of Wales Island Area Plan
- Heceta Timber Sale Preliminary Best Interest Finding, SSE-1357-K

The administrative record for this sale is maintained at the Division of Forestry & Fire Protection Southeast Area Office filed as SSE-1357-K.

A. Legal description

The timber sale area is found within Sections 7, 8, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21 of Township (T) 70S South(S), Range (R) 78 East (E), and Sections 12, 13, 23, and 24 of T70S, R77E all referenced to the Copper River Meridian (CRM). (see attached maps titled Appendix A SSE-1357-K Heceta Timber Sale Maps)

B. Operational Period

Calendar years 2026-2030

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

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 checked="" 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 Construction and Use, USFS District Ranger and Engineering Staff

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

Harvest units are comprised of mix of mature old growth and mature young growth composed of western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*), Sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*), western redcedar (*Thuja plicata*) and incidental Alaska yellow cedar (*Chamaecyparis nootkatensis*). Approximately 50-70-year-old young growth timber surrounds Unit 1. The stand was thinned commercially to the east on USFS land in 2016. Unit 2 has 30-40-year-old second growth bordering the western side of the unit and 80-year-old young growth to the east alongside Sea Otter Sound. These coastal areas have been generally logged selectively in the early 1940’s and retain some old growth characteristics.

B. Timber Harvest Activities

Timber Harvest Activities are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. Timber Harvest Activities

Unit ID	Acres	Topography	Silvicultural Action	Logging Method
1	100.7	Irregular Slopes	Even-aged Management utilizing the clearcut system	Cable with Shovel Logging
2	82.6	Irregular Slopes	Even-aged Management utilizing the clearcut system	Shovel Logging
Total	183.4			

C. Site Preparation

- Site preparation will not be necessary. There is either sufficient residual stocking, or because there has been sufficient soil disturbance by logging to forego 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.
- 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 slopes are $\leq 50\%$
- Maximum percent slopes are $>50\%$

Percentage of sale area with slopes $>50\%$: 5%

Maximum percent slopes: Unit 1: 60% Unit 2: 30%

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

Note: Observed windthrow was associated thin soil overlying bedrock.

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
2	Rice Creek	Anadromous	103-90-10470	100 FT. Timber Retention	Implement AFRPA and Reg., 300 FT. Timber Retention

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: Several small intermittent surface waters sloped greater than 12% were observed in the southeastern portion of Unit 2.

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: *Retention of area adjacent to tidewater in Unit 2 benefiting bald eagle nest and deer wintering area.*

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.) *Retain a multipurpose 300-foot retention area along anadromous stream 103-90-10470 and approximately a 200-to-300-foot coastal area along Unit #2. Minimize significant disturbance of the soil surface in the unit (retain vegetative surface integrity and minimize stump pulling for skidding trails along the eastern edge.)*

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.
- 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

Reforestation utilizing the clearcut method is expected to result in optimal growing conditions for regenerating Sitka spruce, western hemlock, and western redcedar. Increased availability of light and nutrients along with moderately scarified ground from track-based logging equipment is expected to result in a stocked stand within five years of harvest. Historically natural regeneration after a timber harvest in Southeast Alaska has been satisfactory in meeting FRPA reforestation requirements.

Harvest type as it relates to reforestation requirement:

- Clearcut
- 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: Western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*), Sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*), western redcedar (*Thuja plicata*).

- 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 & Fire Protection Road Standards, site specific design may supersede this standard and will typically be specified and applied through the timber sale contract. USFS system and temporary roads shall conform to Road and Special Use permits requirements.

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	Harvest Unit	Mile**	Road Class	Maximum Grade %*	Constructed By	Maintained By
1445000	1	6.8	Primary	NA	Existing	Purchaser
1445500	1	0.22	Secondary	NA	Existing	Purchaser
1445510	1	0.31	Spur	12	Existing	Purchaser
1445000	2	2.62	Primary	NA	Existing	Purchaser
1445310	2	2.12	Secondary	NA	Existing	Purchaser
1445311	2	0.26	Spur	18	Existing	Purchaser

Table 5B. New Road Construction and Use

Road ID	Harvest Unit	Mile/Station**	Road Class	Maximum Grade %	Constructed By	Maintained By
1445311	2	.84	Spur	18	Purchaser	Purchaser
1445510	1	0.82	Spur	18	Purchaser	Purchaser
1445514	1	0.05	Spur	18	Purchaser	Purchaser

Road ID	Harvest Unit	Mile/ Station **	Road Class	Maximum Grade %	Constructed By	Maintained By
1445516	1	0.25	Spur	18	Purchaser	Purchaser
1445518	1	0.05	Spur	18	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.

B. Soil Erosion / Mass Wasting

Maximum percent side slopes: 40%

- Maximum percent side slopes are $\leq 50\%$
- 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	Mile/ Station or Point Label	Identified Erosion Risk	Risk Level	Mitigation
All	--	None	Low	Standard FRPA Best Management Practices

General Timber Sale Erosion Control:

- Grass seeding Erosion control mats Wattle Drivable waterbars
- Other: _____ Not applicable

C. Crossing Structures

- Are you removing or replacing drainage structures? YES NO
- 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	Point Label	Bridge Length (ft.) or Culvert Diameter (in.)	Structure Type [ex. Corrugated Plastic Pipe, Log Stringer, Fabricated, Ice]	AS 41.17.950 Stream Classification	ADF&G AWC Number	Duration of crossing structure in place
--	--	--	--	--	--	--

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	Closure Type All Season/Winter	Estimated Closure Date	Projected Road Use after Timber Harvest
1445311	All	All Season	End of harvest	Silviculture
1445510	All	All Season	End of harvest	Silviculture
1445514	All	All Season	End of harvest	Silviculture
1445516	All	All Season	End of harvest	Silviculture
1445518	All	All Season	End of harvest	Silviculture

D. 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 located as shown on the operation map, in a manner that prevents runoff from entering surface waters.
- Other: Depending on suitable material availability, several rock pits will be developed for construction of the road. The development of any pit will be part of the timber purchaser’s operating plan prior to commencing operations and subject to DFFP approval.

E. 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
--	--	--

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

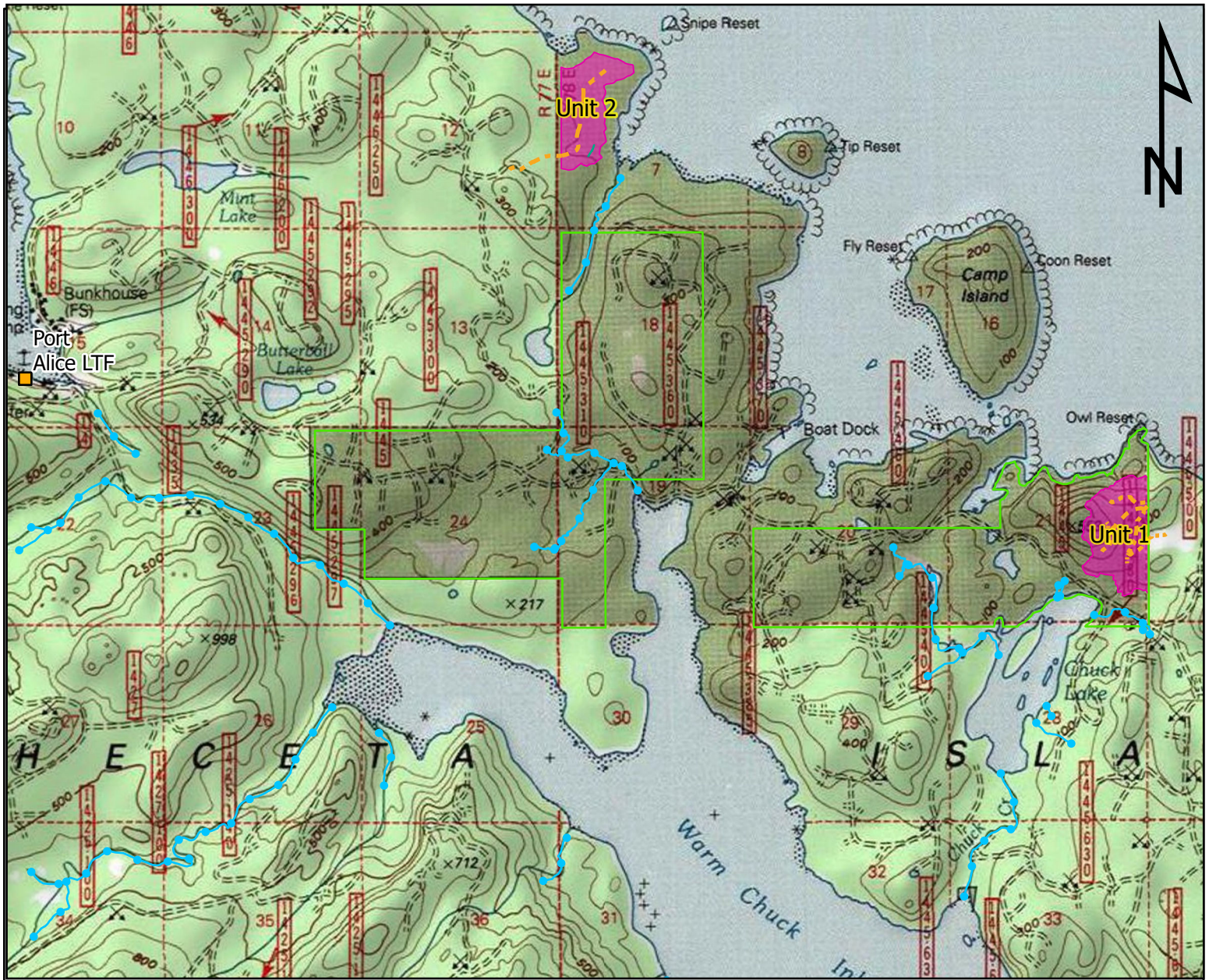
Date

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

Appendix A: Timber Sale Maps

Appendix A1 Area Map (1 page)

Appendix A2 Unit Map (2 pages)



0 2,000 4,000 6,000 8,000 Feet
 1 IN = 4,000 feet







MTR: C070S077E & C070S077E

APPENDIX A1 SSE-1357-K HECETA TIMBER SALE AREA MAP

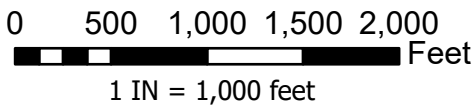
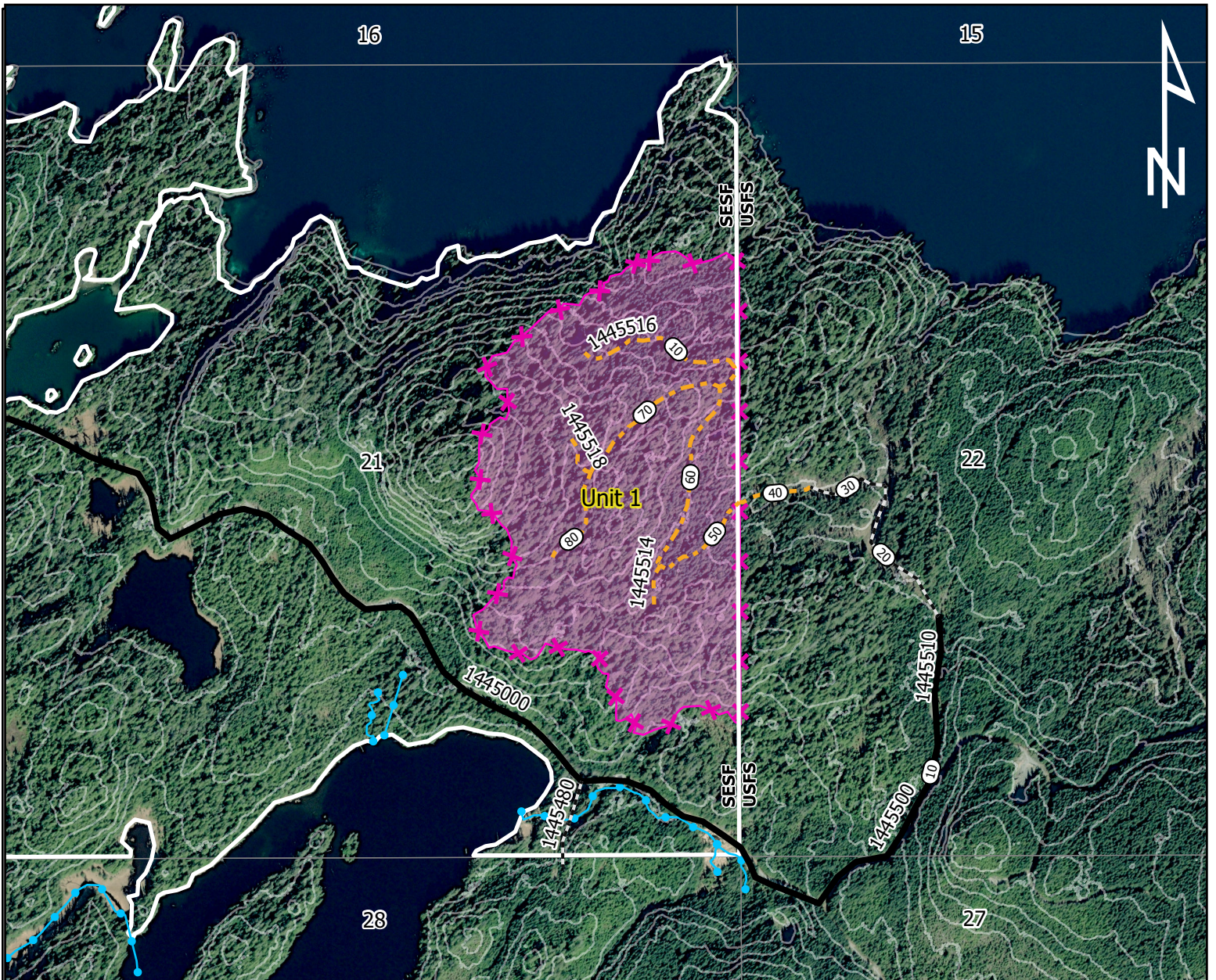


Vicinity Map: 1 IN = 15 miles

Legend

 Harvest Units	 Proposed Roads
 Southeast State Forest	 Cataloged Anadromous Stream
 Log Transfer Facility	 General Water Quality





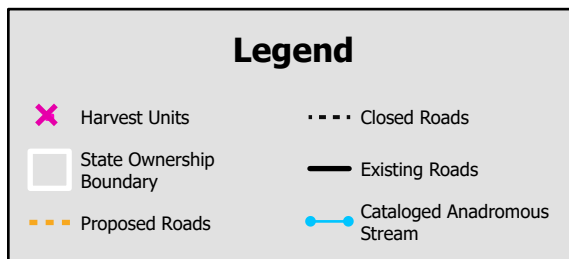
MTR: C070S078E
 Section(s): 15, 16, 21, 22, 27, 28

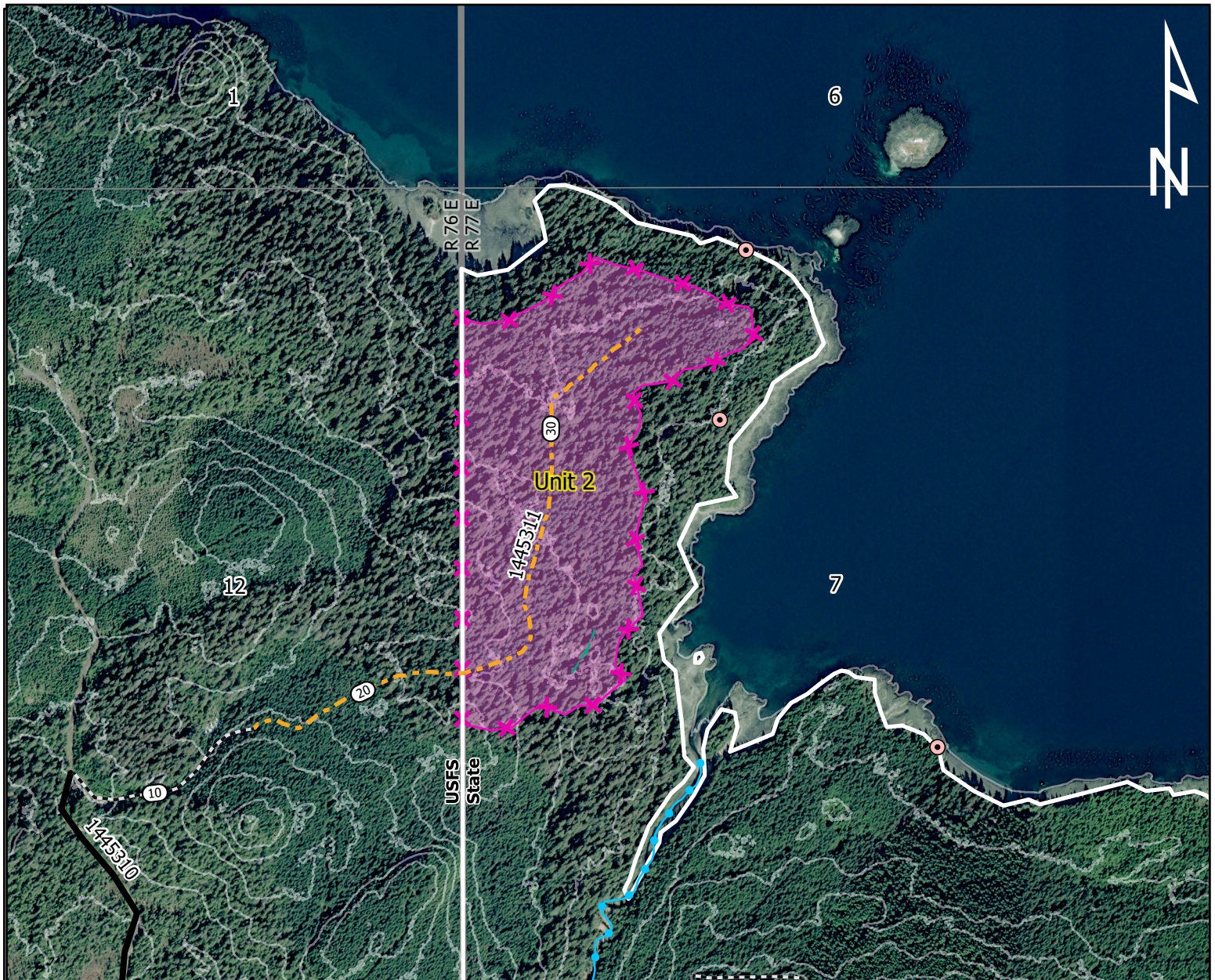
Contour Interval = 40 FT

APPENDIX A2-1 SSE-1357-K HECETA TIMBER SALE UNIT 1 MAP



Vicinity Map: 1 IN = 10 miles



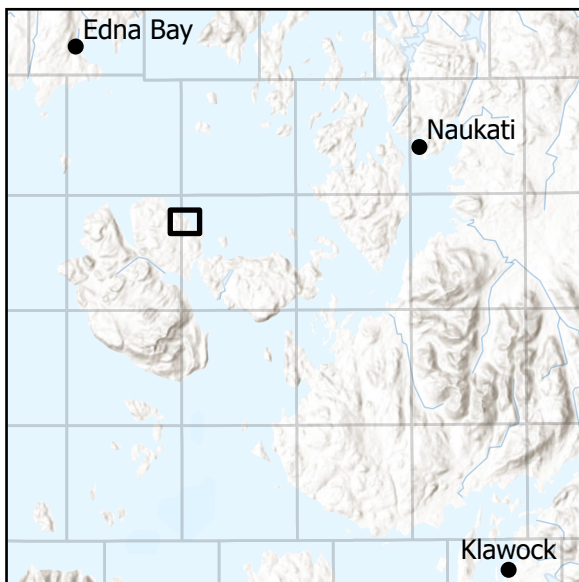


0 500 1,000 1,500 2,000
 Feet
 1 IN = 1,000 feet

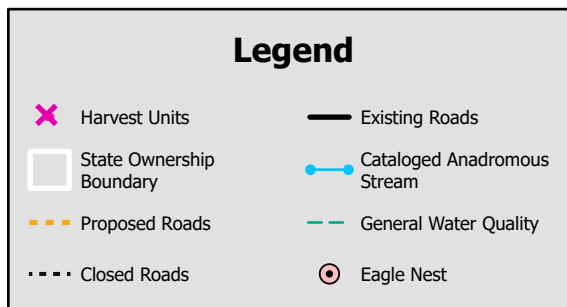
MTR: C070S077E & C070S078E
 Section(s): 1, 6, 7, 12, 13, 18

Contour Interval = 40 FT

APPENDIX A2-2 SSE-1357-K HECETA TIMBER SALE UNIT 2 MAP



Vicinity Map: 1 IN = 10 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