

FISCAL YEAR 2004



Subsistence fishing for salmon is an important part of life in Southeast Alaska.

Collaborative natural resource management in action . . .

Tongass National Forest public servants ensure that the health, productivity, and diversity of the forest is maintained while meeting the economic and social needs of the American public. Tongass employees accomplish that goal by providing the ecological conditions needed to sustain sufficient population levels of wildlife and fish resources to meet the needs of subsistence, recreational and commercial users. The Tongass recently earned the Forest Service's 2003 Rise to the Future award for its collaborative fisheries management plan at the 3,200-acre Redoubt Lake near Sitka. It is one of the first escapement-based management plans of its kind in Southeast Alaska developed to regulate a complex sockeye salmon fishery used extensively by subsistence, sport and commercial fishers. The Redoubt Bay and Lake Sockeye Salmon Management Plan worked to near perfection in its first management season, providing more opportunities for all users as adult sockeye escapement numbers increased to about 70,000 in 2003. Sockeye, or red, salmon are highly valued in Alaska as a food source and cultural harvest activity due to their long history as a favorite fish for smoking, canning and eating fresh. Redoubt Lake is one of the largest subsistence sockeye salmon fisheries in Southeast Alaska.

Educating visitors in an uncommon classroom ...

The Tongass National Forest emphasizes the development of high-quality recreation and tourism opportunities on public lands without adverse impacts on natural resources. Wilderness stewardship and education are vital in fulfilling this goal. The Wilderness Kayak Ranger Interpretive Program recently earned the national Wilderness Education Leadership Award. The award recognizes the program's outstanding efforts in developing a unique and innovative wilderness educational program, which has served as a role model for others to follow. Kayak rangers board small cruise line vessels and educate passengers about the issues, threats and values of wilderness in the United States. On average, rangers board 90 ships during the summer season sharing their wilderness knowledge with nearly 9,000 people from around the world. Misty Fiords stretches out across more than 2.2 million acres at the southern end of Southeast Alaska. It is one of two national monuments in Southeast Alaska managed by the Forest Service. Misty Fiords is just a fraction of the wilderness that can be found within the boundaries of the country's largest national forest. There are 5.8 million acres of designated wilderness on the Tongass, and more than 90 percent of the forest, an area twice the size of Maryland, remains undeveloped, unroaded and wild.



Sea kayaking is a wonderful way to explore the marine wilderness of Misty Fiords National Monument. (photo by K. Tyler)

