



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Alaska Region
Tongass National Forest
Petersburg Ranger District

P.O. Box 1328
Petersburg, AK 99833-1328
Phone: (907) 772-3871
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January 2009

Greetings,

The Forest Service is seeking your involvement regarding a proposal to make timber and other wood products available for sale through the Tongass National Timber Sale Program. The proposed Tonka Timber Sale Project would occur on the Lindenberg Peninsula, Kupreanof Island, on the Petersburg Ranger District, Tongass National Forest.

The Tonka Timber Sale project area is approximately 62,150 acres and is situated between Duncan Canal and the Wrangell Narrows approximately two air miles southwest of Petersburg, Alaska. The Duncan Salt Chuck Petersburg Creek Wilderness provides the northern boundary, and the southern boundary occurs along the southern VCU boundaries of 437 and 447. The existing road system will provide access to much of the area. The existing marine access facility at Tonka along the Wrangell Narrows would be used.

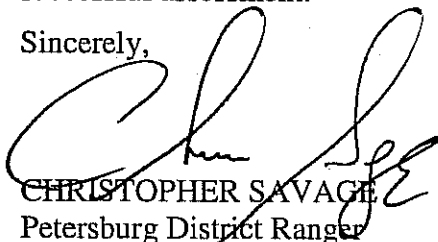
This project will include road management objectives for the Tonka road system and improvements to the Tonka marine access facility. In conjunction with the district-wide process of Access Travel Management, the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that analyzes the Tonka Timber Sale Project will also propose and analyze road access recommendations (which roads will remain open and which roads will be closed after timber harvest activities). The recommendations will be used in the development of the District's Motor Vehicle Use Map scheduled for publication in December 2009.

This letter includes a pre-addressed comment sheet for you to send us your comments. You can also contact me or Ben Case at 907-772-3871, or fax comments to 907-772-5995. Comments may also be e-mailed to comments-alaska-tongass-petersburg@fs.fed.us with Tonka Timber Sale Project EIS in the subject line. It would be most helpful to have comments by February 13, 2009 for the alternative development process. However, comments will be accepted any time.

This letter and the information included are also available on the Tongass National Forest website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/tongass/projects/projects.shtml>.

We look forward to your participation. Your input and ideas will help ensure a successful assessment.

Sincerely,



CHRISTOPHER SAVAGE
Petersburg District Ranger



Caring for the Land and Serving People

Notice of Intent (NOI)
Published in
Federal Register,
January 2009
Forest Service intends to
prepare an EIS.

Scoping 2008
Public is invited to help
identify potential issues for
the EIS.

Public Meetings
Time and location will be
announced in local
newspapers and on local
radio stations. The public is
welcome to provide
comments on this project
during these meetings.

Draft EIS
Anticipated release for
public comment.
Fall 2009

Public Comment Period
At least 45 days from
publication of availability of
the Draft EIS in the
Federal Register.

**Final EIS & Record of
Decision (ROD)**
Anticipated release
Spring 2010

Printed on Recycled Paper



Tonka Timber Sale Project

Proposed Action

The proposed action could provide for single, or multiple timber sale opportunities that harvest approximately 60 million board feet (mmbf) of timber from approximately 3,500 acres of forested land. Eleven miles of new road may be necessary for this timber harvest. Ground-based, as well as helicopter systems, are being proposed. The existing marine access facility (MAF) location along the eastern shore of Lindenberg Peninsula, in the Wrangell Narrows, would be used to transfer logs into the water or onto barges for transport to a mill.

The proposal includes further development on the Tonka MAF. Actions associated with this development include clearing five additional acres and modifying the approach that equipment uses to access the water or barges.

This project may also include stewardship contract opportunities and will consider other resource enhancement projects such as (but not limited to) silviculture treatments, wildlife enhancement, and road work activities.

The Notice of Intent for this project was published in the Federal Register in January of 2009.

Tonka Timber Sale Project Area

Field crews and resource specialists spent the 2008 field season gathering information in the project area. Field work included wildlife, fish, sensitive plant and heritage surveys, stream mapping, soil investigations, transportation planning and timber inventories. Collected data is currently being processed.

The enclosed map shows the preliminary unit pool for the Tonka Timber Sale Project. Geospatial Information System (GIS) layers will be updated as the project progresses and as field data is processed and synthesized. Despite unit pool changes that may occur, the map does offer a sense of where harvest is being proposed.

This project is consistent with the 2008 Forest Plan. The Tonka project area is within the Phase 1 portion of the Timber Program Adaptive Management Strategy. All management activities will adhere to Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines and best management practices will be applied. Alternatives to the proposed action, including a “no action” alternative, will be developed for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Inventoried Roadless

An estimated 30,689 acres of the project area are in inventoried roadless areas (IRAs), as identified in the Final 2008 Forest Plan. The project area includes the entire #216, Lindenberg IRA (22,445 acres) and a portion of #217, Green Rocks IRA (8,244 acres).

Land Use Designations

The following chart displays the Forest Plan land use designation (LUD) acres included in the Tonka Timber Sale Project area. Land use designations are similar to land use zoning designations used by communities. Each “zone,” or LUD, has certain uses that may occur there, and those that may not.

Land Use Designation	Acres
Non-National Forest Land	5,068
Non-development LUDs	
Semi-Remote Recreation	748
Old-growth Habitat	12,388
Development LUDs	
Scenic Viewshed	4,008
Modified Landscape	16,111
Timber Production	23,827
Total	62,150

Note: Forested land within Non-developmental LUDs is unsuitable for timber production.

Tonka Timber Sale Project

Past, Current and Future Management Activities in the Tonka Timber Sale Project Area

Managed Stands

Timber harvest has occurred on about 4,459 acres within the project area.

- From 1939 to 1965 small-scale beach logging harvested 209 acres.
- From 1980 to 1992 larger-scale operations harvested 2,359 acres.
- Since 2000, more recent timber harvest includes 1,140 acres associated with the 1996 South Lindenberg EIS.
- 1,006 acres are planned for pre-commercial thinning in 2009.

Road Management

- There are approximately 61 miles of existing road in the project area. Road maintenance and use of existing rock sources are ongoing.
- The Petersburg Ranger District Access Travel Management work is ongoing and a District Access Travel Management Map that includes the Tonka road system is expected in late 2009.

Marine Access Facility

- Log transfer facility (LTF) maintenance, drainage control and surface lift was completed in 2008.
- The US Air Force is investigating the White Alice Communication Site to determine the nature and extent of any contamination present and to develop an action plan for clean up.

Preliminary Issues

We have identified the following preliminary issues based on project area information and field inventories. The issues also take into account public comments made at Open Houses and on the Kupreanof Island Analysis and other past Kupreanof Island projects.

- Deer Habitat/Deer Subsistence Use: The Lindenberg Peninsula is considered an important deer hunting area to the residents of Petersburg and Kupreanof City. Concerns regard the possible effects that timber harvest and changes in access may have on deer habitat (or deer hunting) in the project area.
- Timber Supply and Timber Economics: This issue concerns the financial efficiency, volume and salability of the proposed volume. It also relates to the potential local employment and revenues generated for communities in the local area.
- Scenery: This issue focuses on how timber harvest units and roads affect the scenic quality, as viewed from Visual Priority Routes and Use Areas (Forest Plan, Appendix F).
- Roadless: This issue focuses on the effects of the proposed action on Inventoried Roadless Areas. The proposed action includes timber harvest and road building in roadless areas.

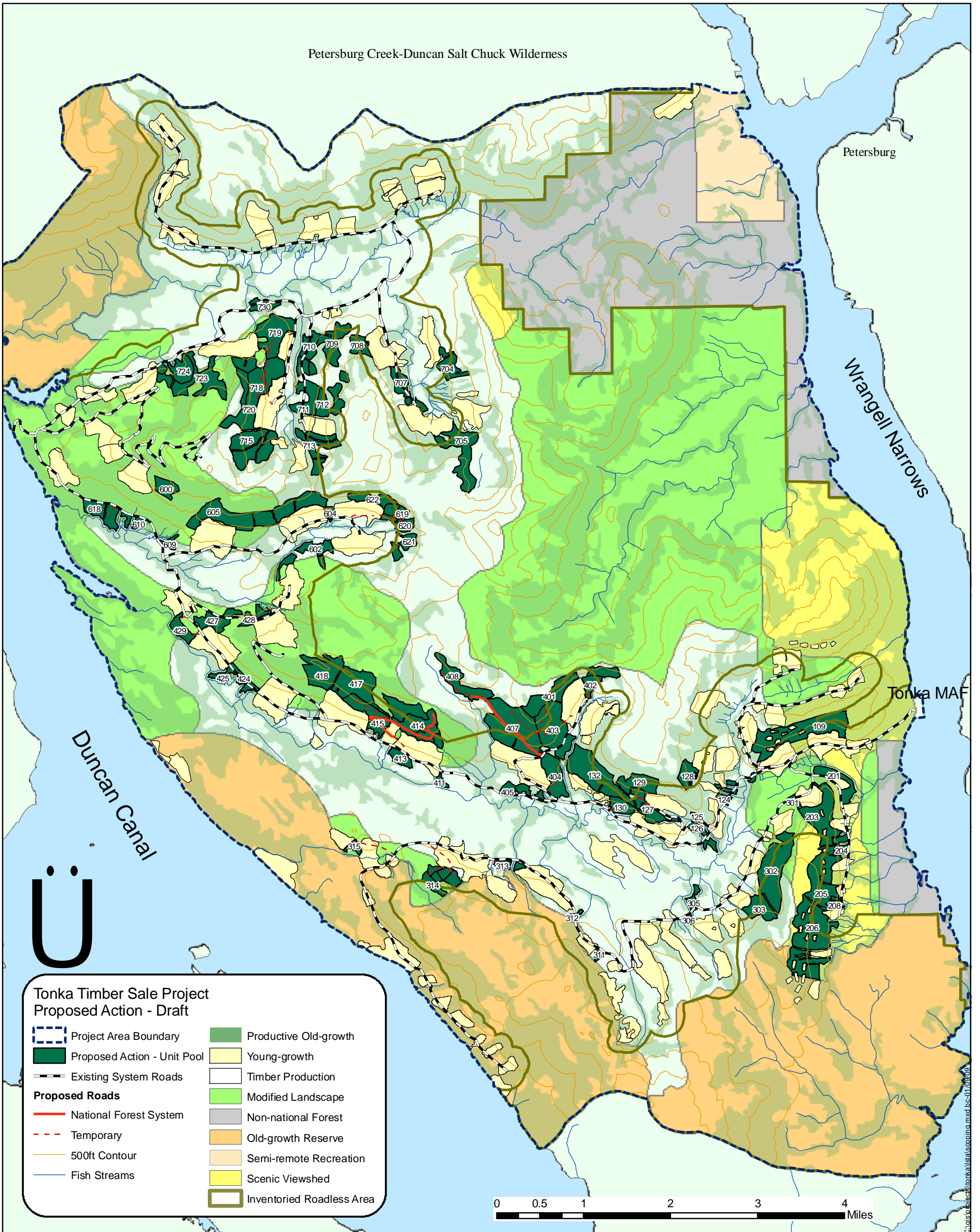
What are your thoughts about this area?

Your input and ideas are important in completing the Tonka Timber Sale Project EIS and for recommending road management objectives along the Tonka road system.

Please fill out the attached comment sheet and return it to us. The map was purposely included on the backside of the comment sheet so any areas of concern can be marked on the map. We want to hear all of your ideas.

Comments are most helpful when they refer to specific areas or resources within the project area. Comments regarding access concerns are also most helpful when they refer to specific roads.

Petersburg Creek-Duncan Salt Chuck Wilderness



**Tonka Timber Sale Project
Proposed Action - Draft**

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Project Area Boundary | Productive Old-growth |
| Proposed Action - Unit Pool | Young-growth |
| Existing System Roads | Timber Production |
| Proposed Roads | Modified Landscape |
| National Forest System | Non-national Forest |
| Temporary | Old-growth Reserve |
| 500ft Contour | Semi-remote Recreation |
| Fish Streams | Scenic Viewshed |
| | Inventoried Roadless Area |

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

NOTE: Your name and address cannot remain confidential if you are on the mailing list. The Forest Service public mailing lists may be made available to those who request them under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

<input type="checkbox"/> YES	I want to stay on the Tonka Timber Sale mailing list. Please send all future project information to my current address, printed below.
<input type="checkbox"/> NO	I do not wish to remain on the Tonka Timber Sale mailing list. Please do not send any further information regarding this project.

If you do not check a box or do not return this form, we will assume that you do not wish to remain on the mailing list.

Please send future Tonka Timber Sale Project EIS information via:

CD (if available)

Hardcopy

Online (notification)

The USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

From:

(return address requested)

TO:
Petersburg Ranger District
Tongass National Forest
Attn: Ben Case, Team Leader
Tonka Timber Sale Project EIS
PO Box 1328
Petersburg, AK 99833



Petersburg Ranger District
Tongass National Forest
Comments requested by
February 13, 2009

Petersburg Ranger District
Tongass National Forest
PO Box 1328
Petersburg, Alaska 99833