

ROADLESS RULE

Talking Points/Bullets

- Inventoried roadless areas in the Tongass National Forest amount to 9.5 million acres or 57% of existing acreage.
- Inventoried roadless areas in the Chugach National Forest amount to 5.4 million acres or 99% of existing acreage.
- In addition, congressionally designated wilderness makes up 5.9 million acres (35%) of the Tongass.
- Within the State of Alaska, there is an extensive network of federally protected acres. Federal lands comprise 59% of the State and 40% of Federal lands in Alaska are in conservation system units.
- On May 28, 2010, the Secretary of Agriculture issued a second memorandum (1045-155), continuing to reserve to the Secretary the authority to approve or disapprove construction and reconstruction of roads and the cutting, sale or removal of timber in those areas identified in the set of inventoried roadless area maps contained in the 11/2000 EIS for Roadless Area Conservation Rule.
- Since the issuance of memorandum 1045-155, the Secretary has only approved 7 projects. Two of these related to the Swan – Tyee Intertie: the first approved the easement for the already permitted and constructed line and the second approved the necessary helipads for transmission line access.
- There are approximately 15 hydro projects on the Chugach & Tongass National Forests that have at least a preliminary permit from FERC.
- 14 of these 15 projects are subject to the Roadless Rule and will require the Secretary of Agriculture's approval.
- It appears that the Secretary is not 'disapproving' permits but is not approving them either. This places these projects in jeopardy of losing their FERC preliminary permit because they are unable to proceed with the field studies and planning as required by FERC.
- The Integrated Resource Planning process is beginning in Southeast Alaska which is intended to identify the most feasible and economic transmission line and hydroelectric projects. The majority of these projects will be on or will cross the Tongass National Forest and most will be located within the inventoried Roadless areas. The re-implementation of the Roadless Rule will seriously jeopardize the development of hydro and the displacement of diesel generation.
- In addition to the barriers the Roadless Rule has placed upon future hydro and transmission line development, the Roadless Rule essentially terminates or substantially delays any type of economic development on Alaska's National Forests including commercial timber harvest, road building, mining and other activities that promote economic growth.