

**HB**

**162**

# SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT

DATE: 4/16/09

FURTHER: Finance

DATE TURNED  
IN TO OFFICE: \_\_\_\_\_

Resources Committee considered HOUSE BILL NO. 162

## HB 162 SOUTHEAST STATE FOREST

"An Act establishing the Southeast State Forest and relating to the Southeast State Forest; and providing for an effective date."

and recommends:

- be replaced with  SCS or  CS \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_)
- adopt previous  SCS or  CS \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_)
- attached amendment(s)
- adopt \_\_\_\_\_ Letter of Intent
- further referral to \_\_\_\_\_ Committee

**SENATE BILL:**  
 Same Title  
 New Title

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**HOUSE BILL:**  
 Same Title  
 Technical Title Change  
 New Title w/ SCR # \_\_\_\_\_


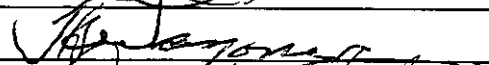
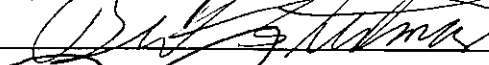
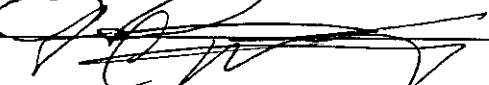
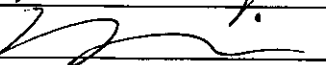

**NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):**

**PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):**

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#

APPROPRIATION - no fiscal note

SIGNATURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:	PRINTED LAST NAME	Do PASS	Do NOT PASS	NO REC	AMEND
	French			✓	
	WAGONER	✓			
	STODMAN	✓			
	HIGGINS	✗			
CO-CHAIR: 	Wielechowski	✓			
CO-CHAIR: 					

# FISCAL NOTE

**STATE OF ALASKA**  
**2009 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

Fiscal Note Number: 1  
 Bill Version: HB 162  
 (H) Publish Date: 3/2/09

Identifier (file name): 0012-DNR-FOR-02-09-09 Dept. Affected: Natural Resources  
 Title Southeast State Forest RDU Resource Development  
 Component Forest Management & Development  
 Sponsor Rules Committee  
 Requester Governor Component Number 435

**Expenditures/Revenues** (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

	Appropriation Required	Information					
		FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015
<b>OPERATING EXPENDITURES</b>							
Personal Services	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Travel	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contractual	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Supplies	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Equipment	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Land & Structures	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Grants & Claims	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Miscellaneous	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
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<b>CHANGE IN REVENUES ( )</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
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**FUND SOURCE** (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1003 GF Match	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1004 GF	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1005 GF/Program Receipts	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1037 GF/Mental Health	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other Interagency Receipts	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

Estimate of any current year (FY2009) cost: 0.0

**POSITIONS**

Full-time	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Part-time	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Temporary	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

**ANALYSIS:** (Attach a separate page if necessary)

This bill establishes a 25,291-acre State Forest in Southern Southeast Alaska by redesignating certain state-owned parcels. A timber management plan would be developed to actively manage the parcels for higher timber volumes per acre, shorter rotations and less impact on wildlife. This would involve thinning young second-growth stands; a long-term investment not justified for undesignated lands.

Implementation of this bill will not require new positions or funding. The bill will have no short-term impact to the revenue stream, but will provide for long-term increases in forest productivity and subsequent increased timber revenues.

Prepared by: Chris Maisch, Director  
 Division Division of Forestry  
 Approved by: Tom Irwin, Commissioner  
Natural Resources

Phone 451-2660  
 Date/Time February 9, 2009  
 Date February 9, 2009

## Briefing: HB 162 Southeast State Forest

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



Alaska Department of  
**NATURAL  
RESOURCES**

January 24, 2010

DIVISION OF FORESTRY

**Background.** The state Department of Natural Resources manages over 156,000 acres of forest land in Southern Southeast (SSE) Alaska. Of this land, timber management is allowed on approximately 49,000 acres. The state actively manages this timber base to supply wood to local processors. Remaining land is designated primarily for other uses including land sales, recreation, water resources, and fish and wildlife habitat, including over 25,000 acres of legislatively designated state parks, refuges, and public use areas.

In SSE, demand for state timber exceeds supply. The majority of timber in SSE is on federal land, but federal timber sales have declined drastically. Local mills now depend heavily on state timber for survival. The state is committed to finding long-term solutions by:

- maximizing the sustainable supply of timber from the small state timber base.
- working with the US Forest Service to increase economically feasible federal timber sales, and
- accelerating the transition from old-growth harvesting to harvesting second-growth.

There is broad support for shifting timber harvesting in SE Alaska from old growth to second-growth stands. Actively-managed second-growth stands provide more timber volume per acre on shorter rotations, and have less impact on wildlife. Much of the state timber land was inherited from the USFS with young second-growth stands. We can accelerate the shift to second-growth harvesting and increase timber volume on state land by thinning these stands. However, thinning is a long-term investment, and is only justified if the land will continue to be available for forest management. Legislatively designating a State Forest would ensure that some land will remain available for long-term forest management.

**Purpose.** This bill would establish a new Southeast State Forest from state lands presently used for timber harvest. The Division of Forestry will be able to manage the State Forest for a long-term supply of timber to local processors, and retain the land in state ownership for multiple uses.

**Proposed State Forest land.** The proposed Southeast State Forest includes 20 parcels totaling approximately 25,291 acres (see chart). Parcels are General Use lands on Prince of Wales, Tuxekan, Kosciusko, Heceta, Revilla, and Gravina islands, and on the mainland at Crittenden Creek. The Division of Forestry worked with the Division of Mining, Land, and Water Management to identify and exclude lands that are priorities for the state land disposal program.

**State Forest Management.** The Southeast State Forest would be managed as part of the State Forest System under AS 41.17.200-.230. Lands in the State Forest would continue to be open for multiple uses, including wildlife habitat and harvest and recreational activities. State Forest lands would be managed consistent with the management intent under the current Prince of Wales Island and Central Southeast area plans. Changes to management intent would require public and interagency review through adoption of a State Forest Management Plan under AS 41.17.230.

**Municipal Entitlements.** The City and Borough of Wrangell boundary encompasses three parcels in the proposed state forest (Crittenden Creek and Bradfield Canal East and West). A State Forest designation will not affect the amount or location of land the Wrangell Borough can select. That determination is based on the maximum total acreage of vacant, unappropriated, unreserved land in the borough boundaries within two years after the date of incorporation (AS 29.65.030). However, a borough would not normally be able to select land within a State Forest. To avoid conflicts with the Wrangell entitlement, the Southeast State Forest bill specifies that the Wrangell Borough may select State Forest land within the borough boundary.

If new municipalities are incorporated before June 30, 2019, lands that were vacant, unappropriated, unreserved land before establishment of the State Forest will be included in the calculation of the municipal entitlement acreage, but may not be selected.

<b>PROPOSED SOUTHEAST STATE FOREST</b>			
<b>Planning Unit</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>General Location</b>	<b>Island</b>
<b>Prince of Wales Island Area Plan</b>			
4a	1,528.21	El Capitan – North	Prince of Wales
4a	600.44	El Capitan – South	Prince of Wales
6a	1,558.11	Coffman Cove – West	Prince of Wales
6a	320	Coffman Cove – East	Prince of Wales
7b	200	Tuxekan – East	Tuxekan
7c	436.89	Naukati – North	Prince of Wales
7c	640	Naukati – South	Prince of Wales
8b	480	Kosciusko/Edna Bay – North	Kosciusko
8b	2,199.84	Kosciusko/Edna Bay – South	Kosciusko
10a	1,257.92	Heceta Island – West	Heceta
10a	752.8	Heceta Island – East	Heceta
11a	744.32	Control Lake	Prince of Wales
11c	2,040	Thorne Bay – North	Prince of Wales
11c	840	Thorne Bay – South	Prince of Wales
<b>Central Southeast Area Plan</b>			
K-04	324.20	Traitors Cove	Revillagigedo
K-33	901.03	Gravina/Vallenar	Gravina
K-41	4,977.38	Gravina/Bostwick	Gravina
W-01	3,087.72	Crittenden Creek	Mainland
W-19	624.15	Bradfield Canal – West	Mainland
W-20	1,778.56	Bradfield Canal – East	Mainland
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25,291.14</b>	<b>20 parcels</b>	



# RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Growing Alaska Through Responsible Resource Development

January 22, 2010

Senator Lesil McGuire, Co-Chair  
Senator Bill Wielechowski, Co-Chair  
Senate Resources Committee  
Alaska State Legislature, State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: HB 162-An Act to Establish the Southeast Alaska State Forest

Dear Senators McGuire and Wielechowski:

The Resource Development Council (RDC) is writing to support HB 162, the establishment of the Southeast Alaska State Forest.

RDC is a statewide, non-profit, membership-funded organization founded in 1975. The RDC membership is comprised of individuals and companies from Alaska's oil and gas, mining, timber, tourism, and fisheries industries, as well as Alaska Native corporations, local communities, organized labor, and industry support firms. RDC's purpose is to link these diverse interests together to encourage a strong, diversified private sector in Alaska and expand the state's economic base through the responsible development of our natural resources.

The bill would establish a new state forest in Southeast Alaska from state lands presently used for timber harvest. The Division of Forestry would be able to manage the state forest for a long-term supply of timber to local processors, and retain the land in state ownership for multiple use. The forest would be managed as part of the State Forest System and under the current Prince of Wales Island and Central Southeast area plans.

In Southeast Alaska, demand for state timber exceeds supply and local mills are dependent on a consistent supply to stay in business. The majority of the timber in Southeast Alaska is on federal land, but federal timber sales have declined sharply. Subsequently, the demand for state timber from local mills has increased significantly.

Much of the proposed forest was inherited from the U.S. Forest Service with young second-growth stands. There is broad support for shifting timber harvesting in Southeast Alaska from old growth to second growth stands. Establishment of the Southeast Alaska State Forest will help provide a sustainable timber supply to local mills and accelerate the harvest of second-growth timber. Actively managed second-growth stands will provide more timber volume per acre on shorter rotations.

The shift to second-growth harvesting can be accelerated and timber volume increased on state land by thinning these stands. However, thinning is a long-term investment and is only justified if the land will continue to be available for forest management. A legislatively designated State Forest would ensure that land would remain available for long-term forest management.

RDC encourages your committee to support HB 162. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this important legislation.

Sincerely,

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL  
For Alaska, Inc.

Carl Portman  
Deputy Director

**Founded 1975**

**Executive Director**

Jason W. Brune

**2009-2010 Executive Committee**

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Bill Jeffress

Mike Jungreis

Frank Kelty

Kip Knudson

Thomas Krzewinski

Linda Leary

Carri Lockhart

John MacKinnon

Mary McDowell

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James Mery

Denise Michels

Lance Miller

Mary Nelson

Lisa Parker

Judy Patrick

Charlie Powers

Ralph Samuels

Keith Sanders

Kenneth Sheffield

Keith Silver

Jeanine St. John

John Sturgeon

Dan Sullivan

John Zager

**Ex-Officio Members**

Senator Mark Begich

Senator Lisa Murkowski

Congressman Don Young

Governor Sean Parnell



## Alaska Society of American Foresters

February 18, 2010

Chris Maisch, State Forester  
Alaska Division of Forestry  
3700 Airport Way  
Fairbanks, AK 99709

Dear Mr. Maisch,

The Alaska Society of American Foresters strongly supports the adoption of House Bill 162: "An Act establishing the Southeast State Forest and relating to the Southeast State Forest; and providing for an effective date" and the corresponding Senate Bill 127.

The Alaska Society is a state chapter of the national Society of American Foresters (SAF), the national scientific and educational organization representing the forestry profession in the United States. The Alaska SAF's support of House Bill 162 parallels the SAF Core Values:

- Forests are a fundamental source of global health and human welfare,
- Forests must be sustained through simultaneously meeting environmental, economic, and community aspirations and needs,
- Foresters are dedicated to sound forest management and conservation, and
- Foresters serve landowners and society by providing sound knowledge and professional management skills

The Alaska SAF supports the establishment of the southeast state forest as it promotes continued timber and resource management in Southeast Alaska. In doing so, state forests support timber production, wood energy, recreation, habitat and jobs. Formal designation as a state forest provides the incentive for the Alaska Division of Forestry to invest in management of these lands for their multiple benefits to the community and natural resources of the region.

Furthermore, the Alaska SAF concurs with the Juneau Chapter of SAF in its Resolution attached.

Sincerely,

Sue Rodman, Chair  
Alaska Society of American Foresters

Enclosure

## Resolution

Whereas the majority of timber in SE Alaska is on federally owned National Forest land, harvest of which has drastically declined and local mills are heavily dependent on sale of state timber, and;

Whereas the state is committed to maximizing the sustainable supply of timber from the small state timber land base, and;

Whereas, there is broad support for shifting timber harvesting in SE Alaska from old growth to young growth stands, which yield higher volumes per acre on shorter rotations, and have less impact on wildlife, and;

Whereas, much of the state timber land was conveyed from the federal government with young growth stands, the shift from old growth to young growth harvest can be accelerated by thinning these stands, and;

Whereas, thinning and subsequent young growth management constitutes long-term investment, it is only justified if the land will continue to be available for forest management, and;

Whereas land designated as State Forest would ensure that some land will remain available for long-term management for multiple uses including the supply of timber to local processors, and;

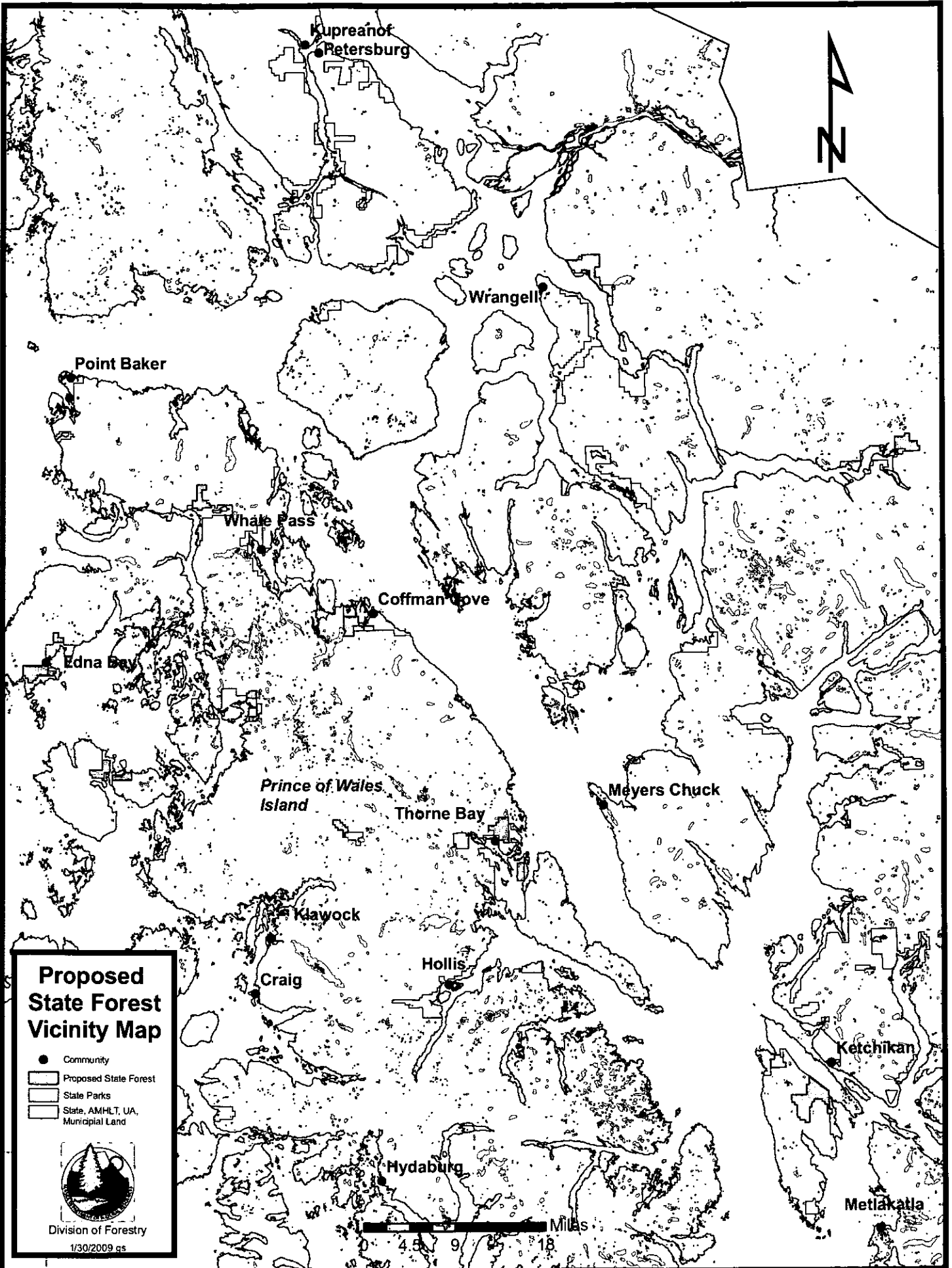
Whereas, the State owns 20 parcels of land comprising approximately 25,291 acres suitable for designation and subsequent management as a State Forest, now therefore;

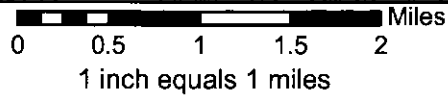
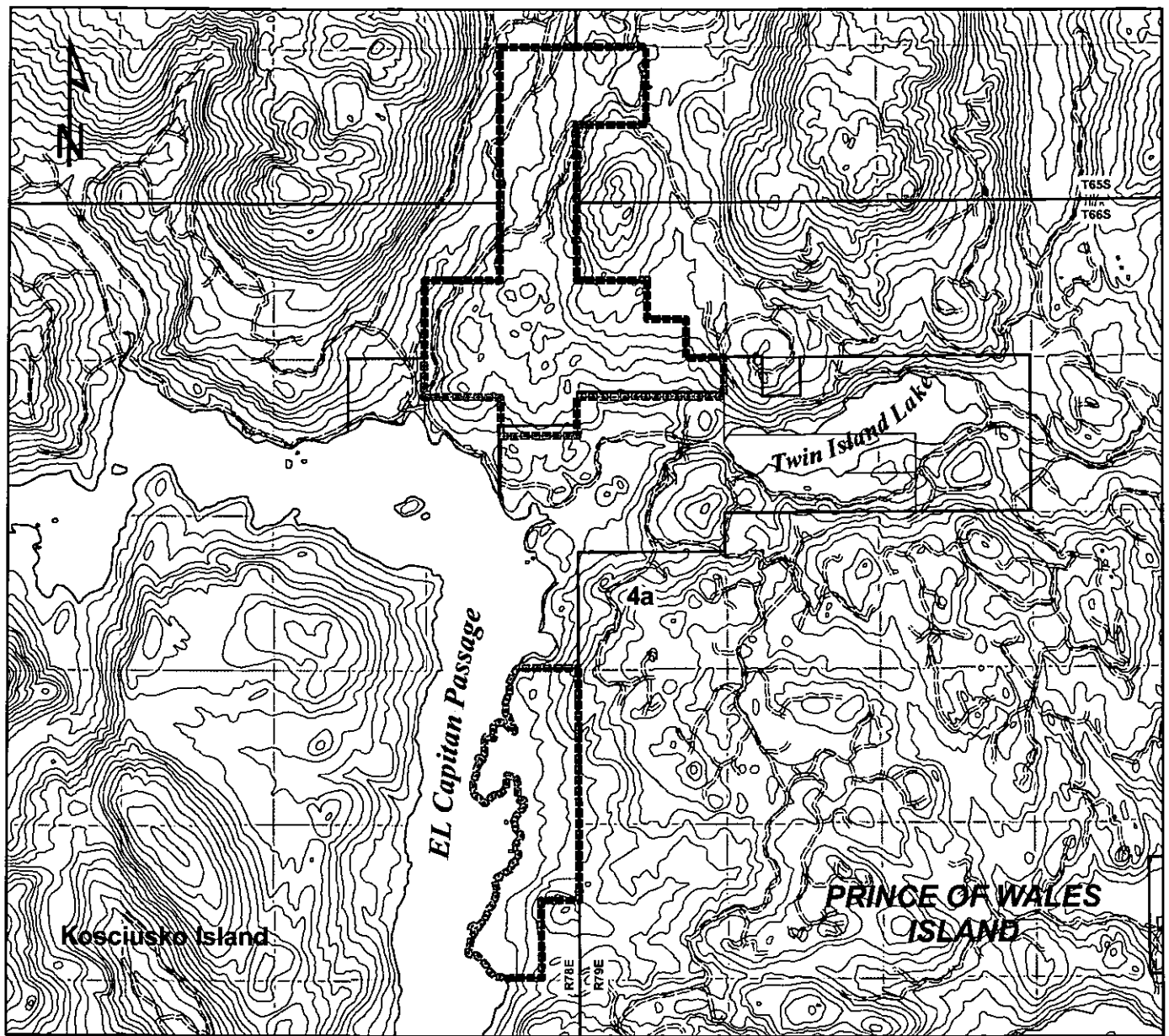
Be it resolved that the Juneau Chapter Alaska Society of American Foresters (SAF) generally endorses establishment of a Southeast Alaska State Forest as currently proposed in House Bill #162 "An Act establishing the Southeast State Forest and relating to the Southeast State Forest; and providing for an effective date" and Senate Bill #127.

And be it finally resolved that the Juneau Chapter of the Alaska Society of American Foresters transmit this resolution to the Governor of Alaska, House and Senate Resource Committee Chair, Alaska State Legislature, the Alaska Congressional Delegation, the U.S. Forest Service Chief, U.S. Forest Service Alaska Regional Forester.

Adopted by unanimous vote of the Juneau Chapter, Alaska Society of American Foresters, January 20, 2010.

/s/ Michael McClellan  
Michael McClellan, Chair





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**Legend**

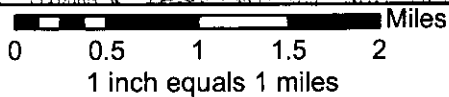
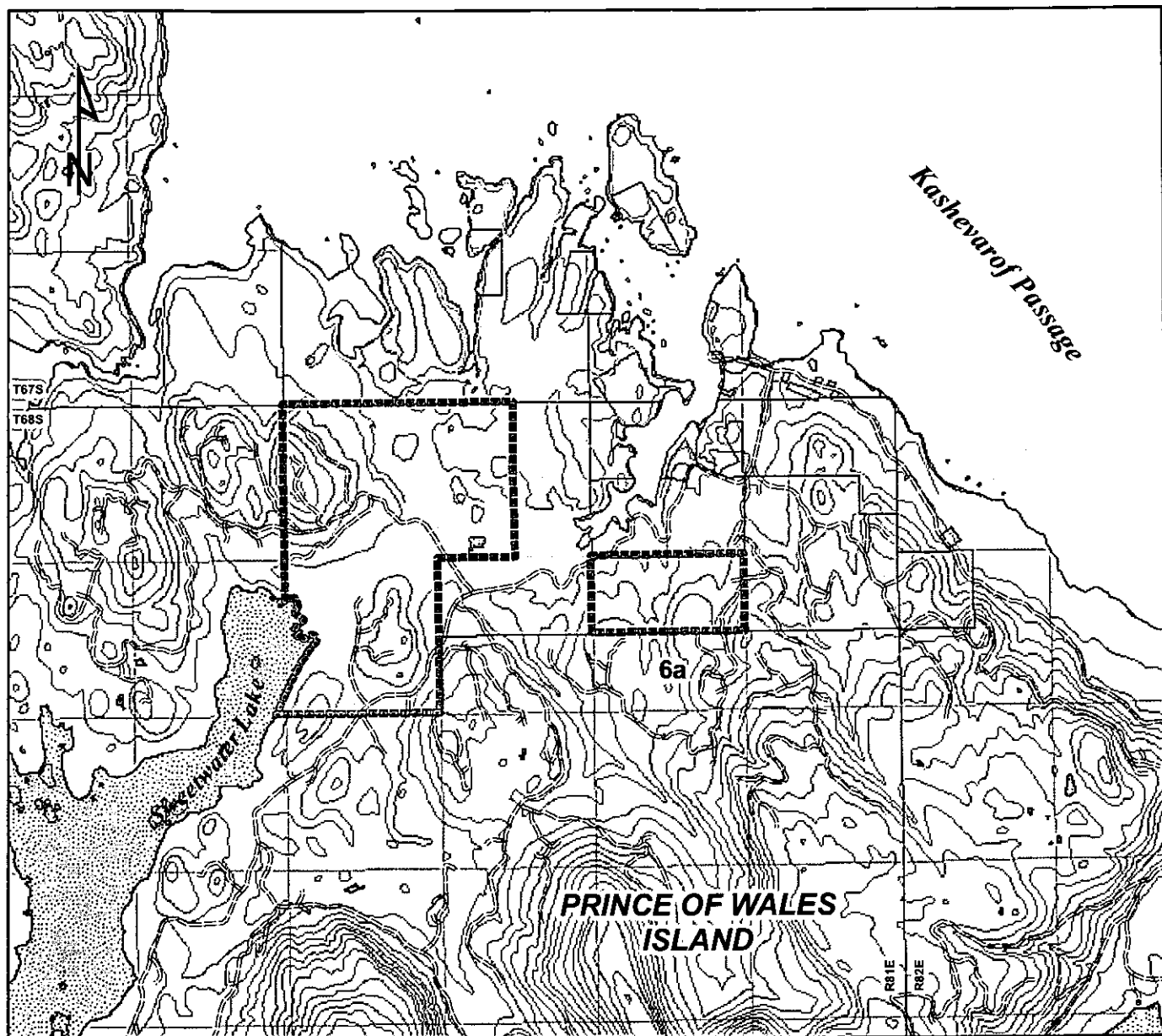
- Property Line
- ▤ Proposed State Forest
- GU
- Disposable
- Recreation
- Habitat
- ==== Roads

**Proposed  
Southeast Alaska  
State Forest  
El Capitan**



**DIVISION OF FORESTRY**

1/30/09 gs



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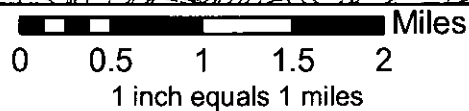
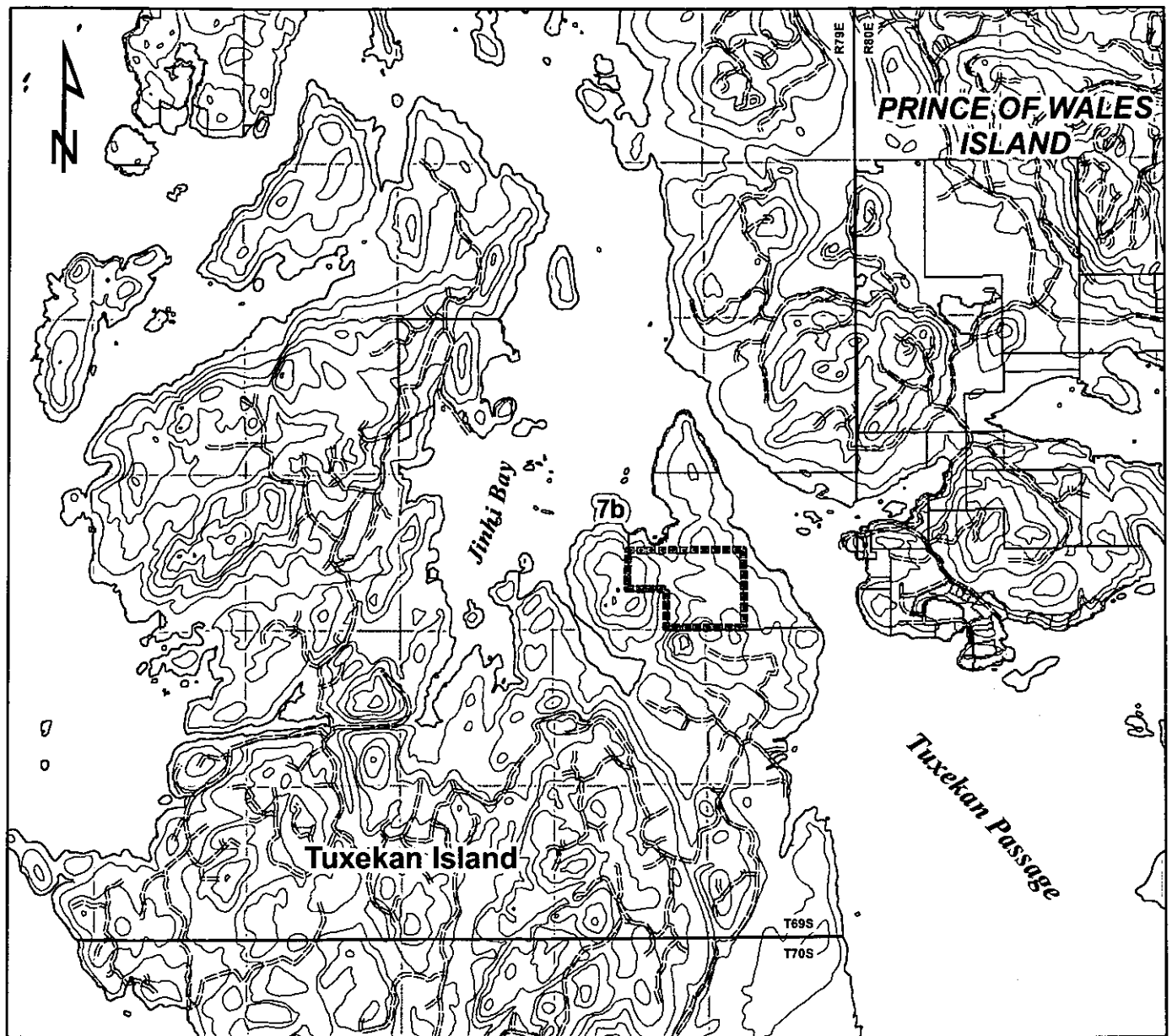
**Legend**

- Proposed State Forest
- GU
- Disposable
- Recreation
- Habitat
- Roads

**Proposed  
Southeast Alaska  
State Forest  
Coffman Cove**









**DIVISION OF FORESTRY**  
1/19/2009 gs



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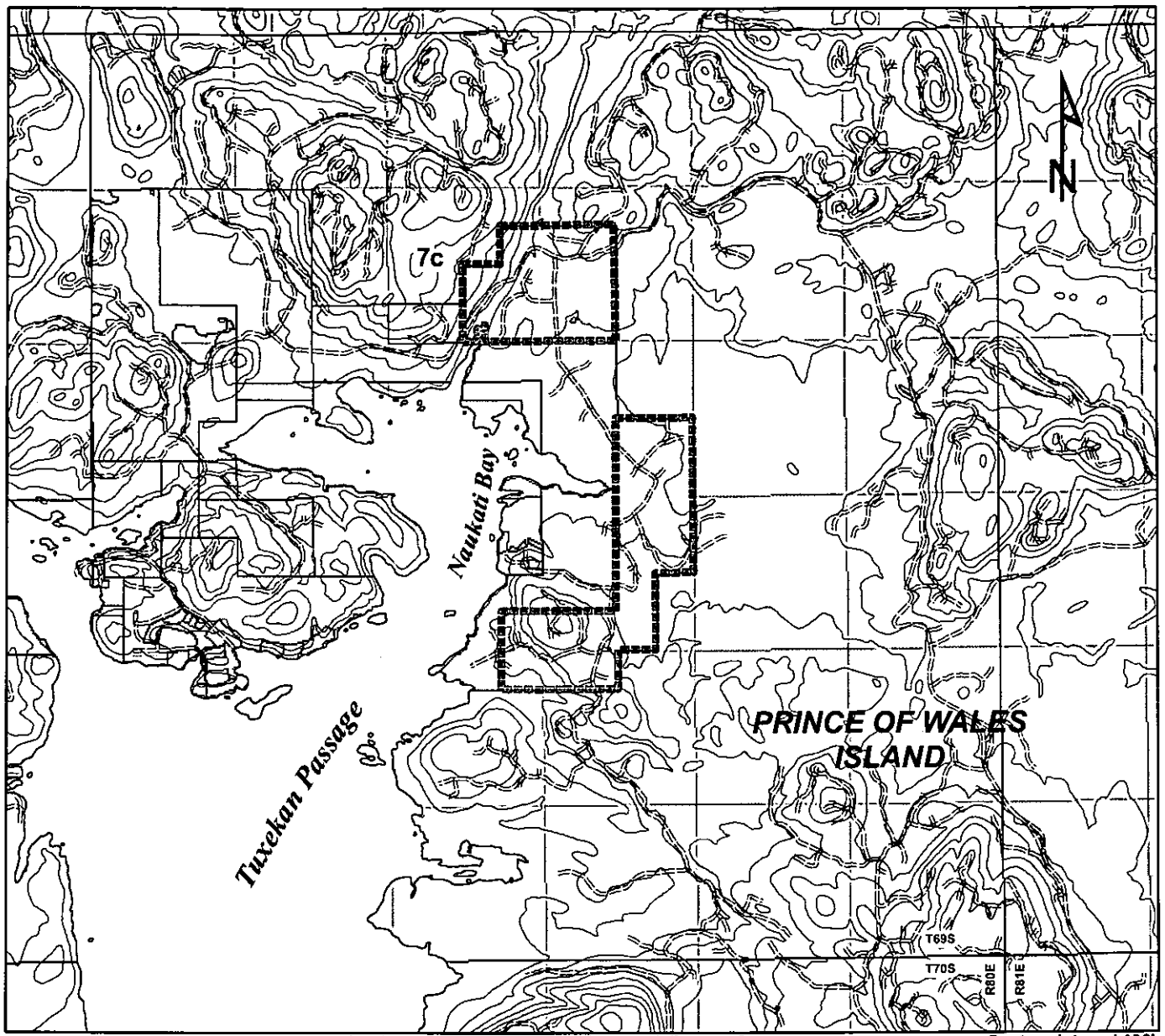
-  Proposed State Forest
-  GU
-  Disposable
-  Recreation
-  Habitat
-  Roads

**Proposed  
Southeast Alaska  
State Forest  
Tuxekan**



**DIVISION OF FORESTRY**

1/21/2009 gs








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1 inch equals 1 miles

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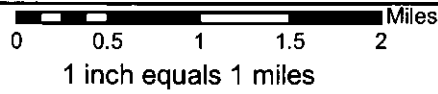
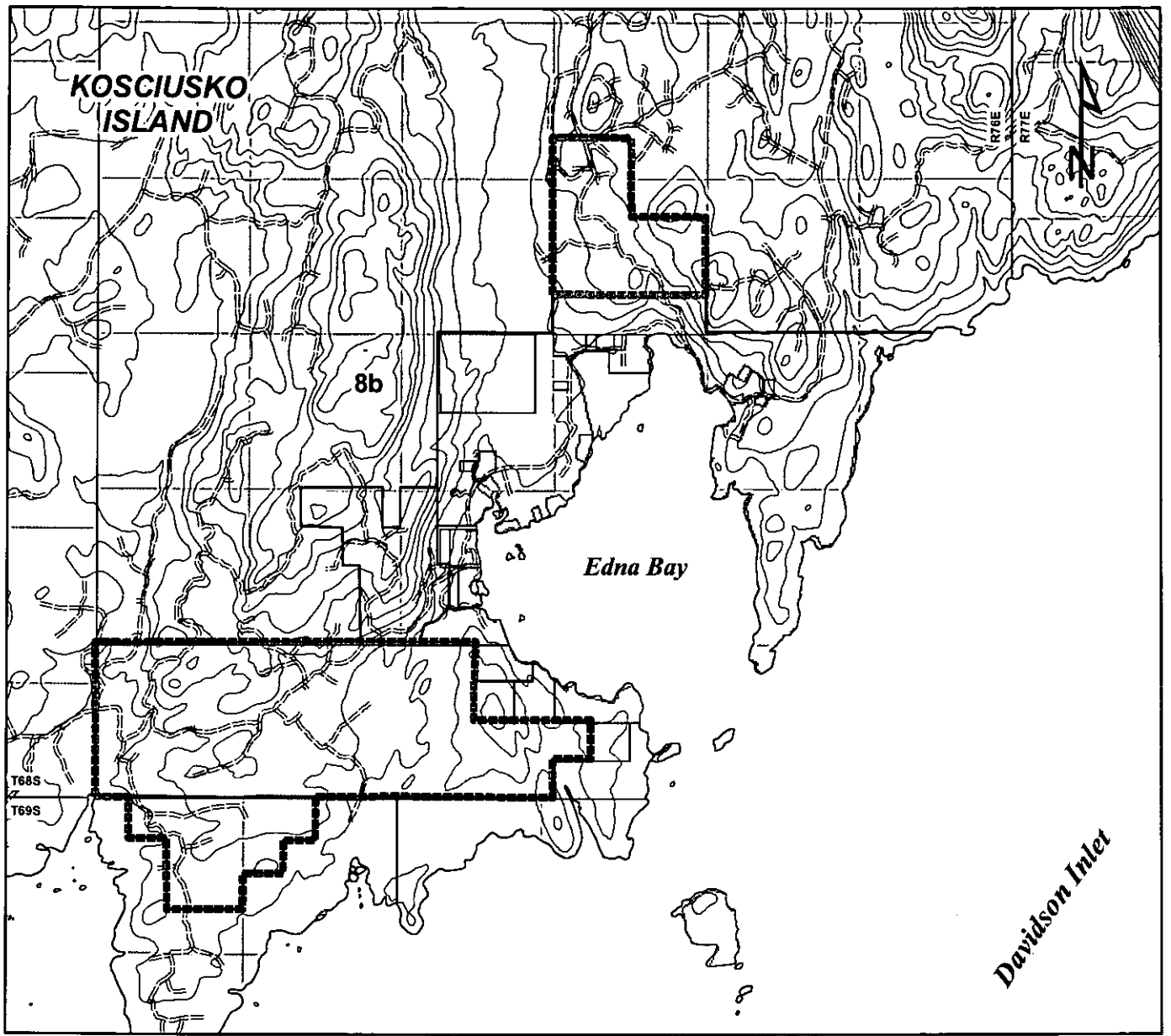
-  Proposed State Forest
-  GU
-  Disposable
-  Recreation
-  Habitat

**Proposed  
Southeast Alaska  
State Forest  
Naukati**



**DIVISION OF FORESTRY**

1/19/2009 gs



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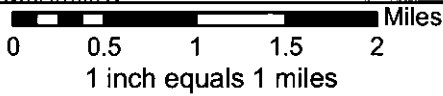
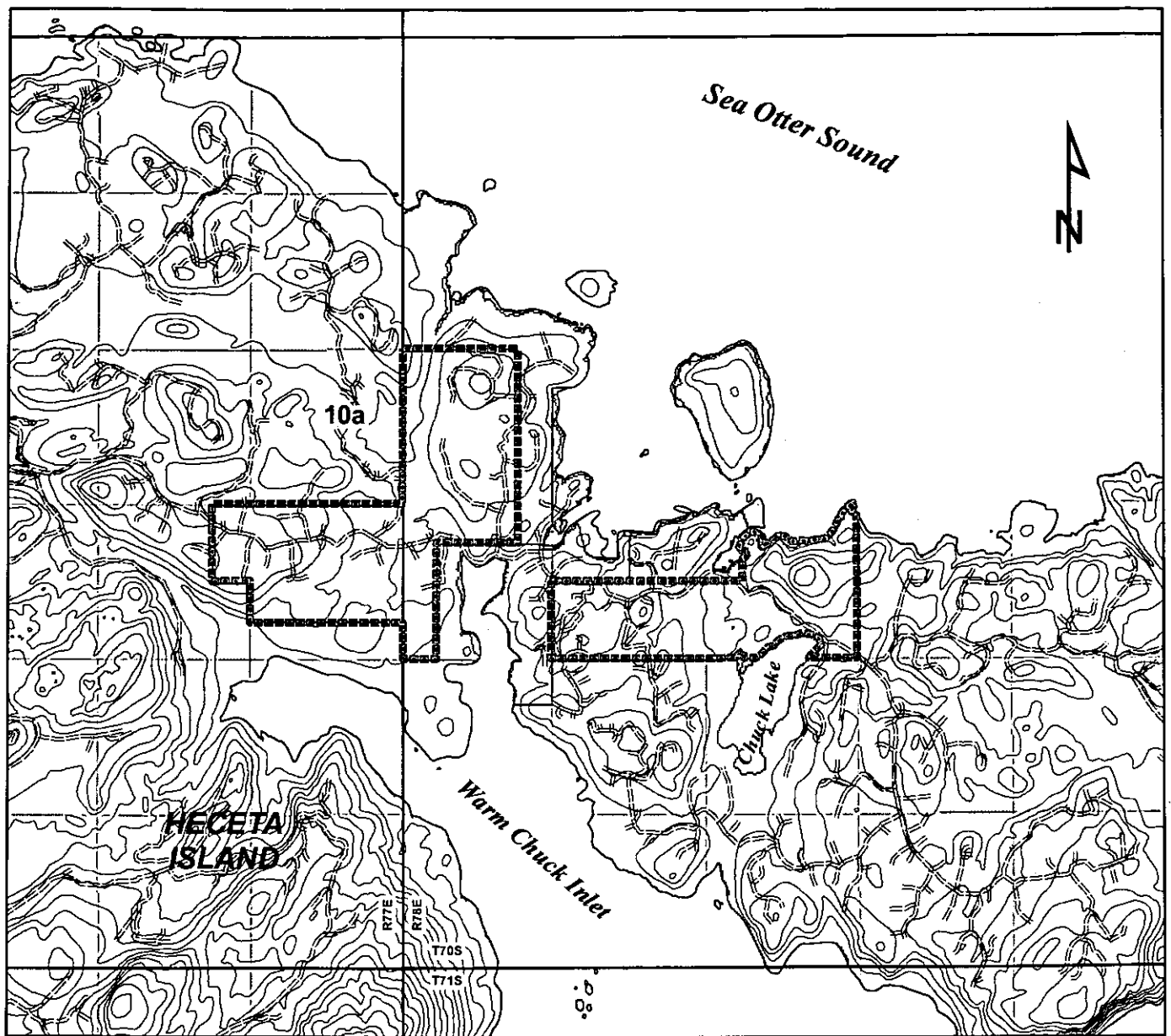
- Property Line
- ▬ Proposed State Forest
- == Roads
- GU
- Disposable
- Recreation
- Habitat

**Proposed  
Southeast Alaska  
State Forest  
Kosciusko (Edna Bay)**









**DIVISION OF FORESTRY**

1/30/09 gs



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### Legend

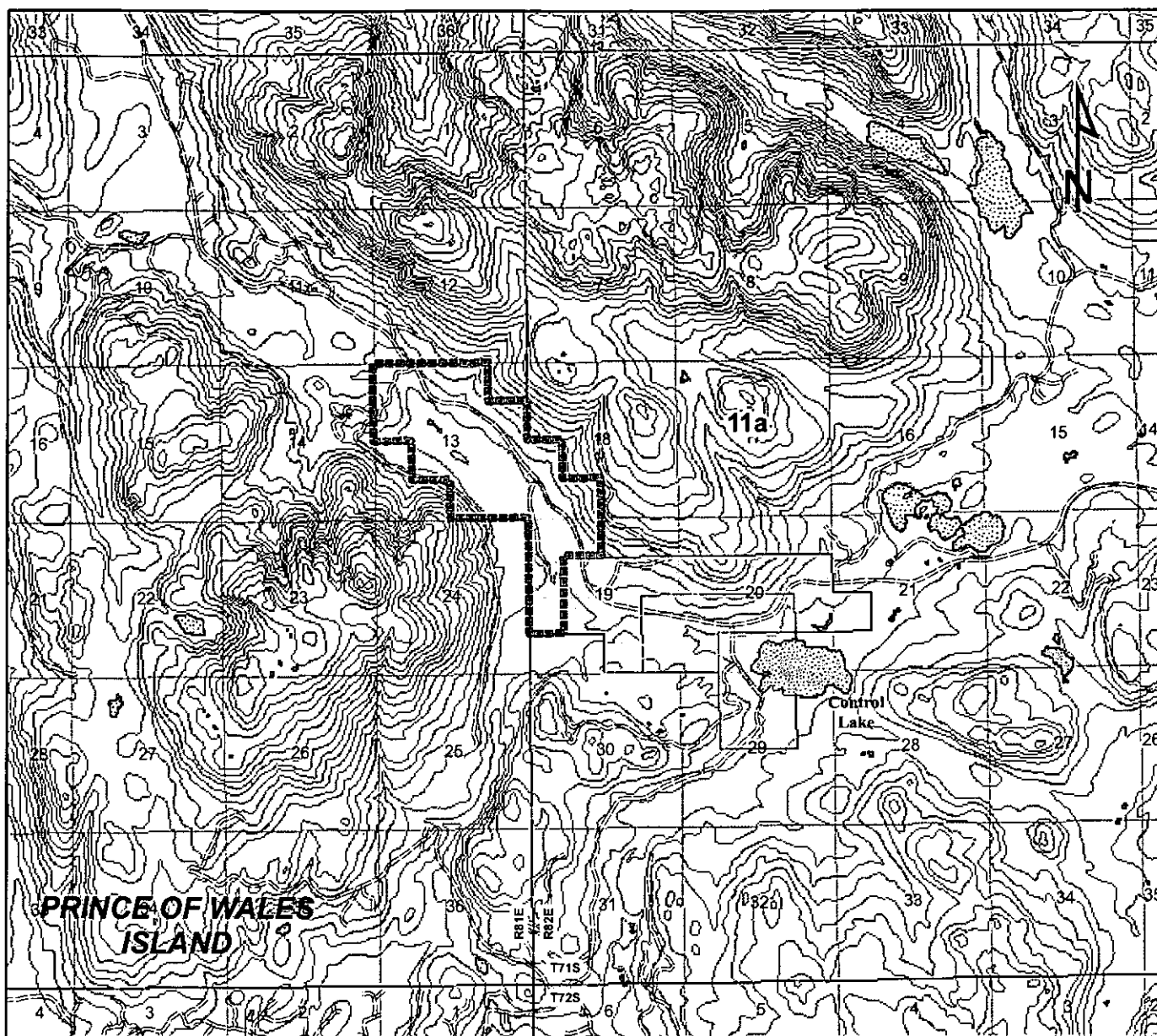
-  Proposed State Forest
-  Roads
-  GU
-  Disposable
-  Recreation
-  Habitat

## Proposed Southeast Alaska State Forest Heceta Island









DIVISION OF FORESTRY

12/03/08 gs



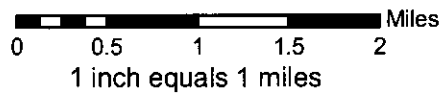
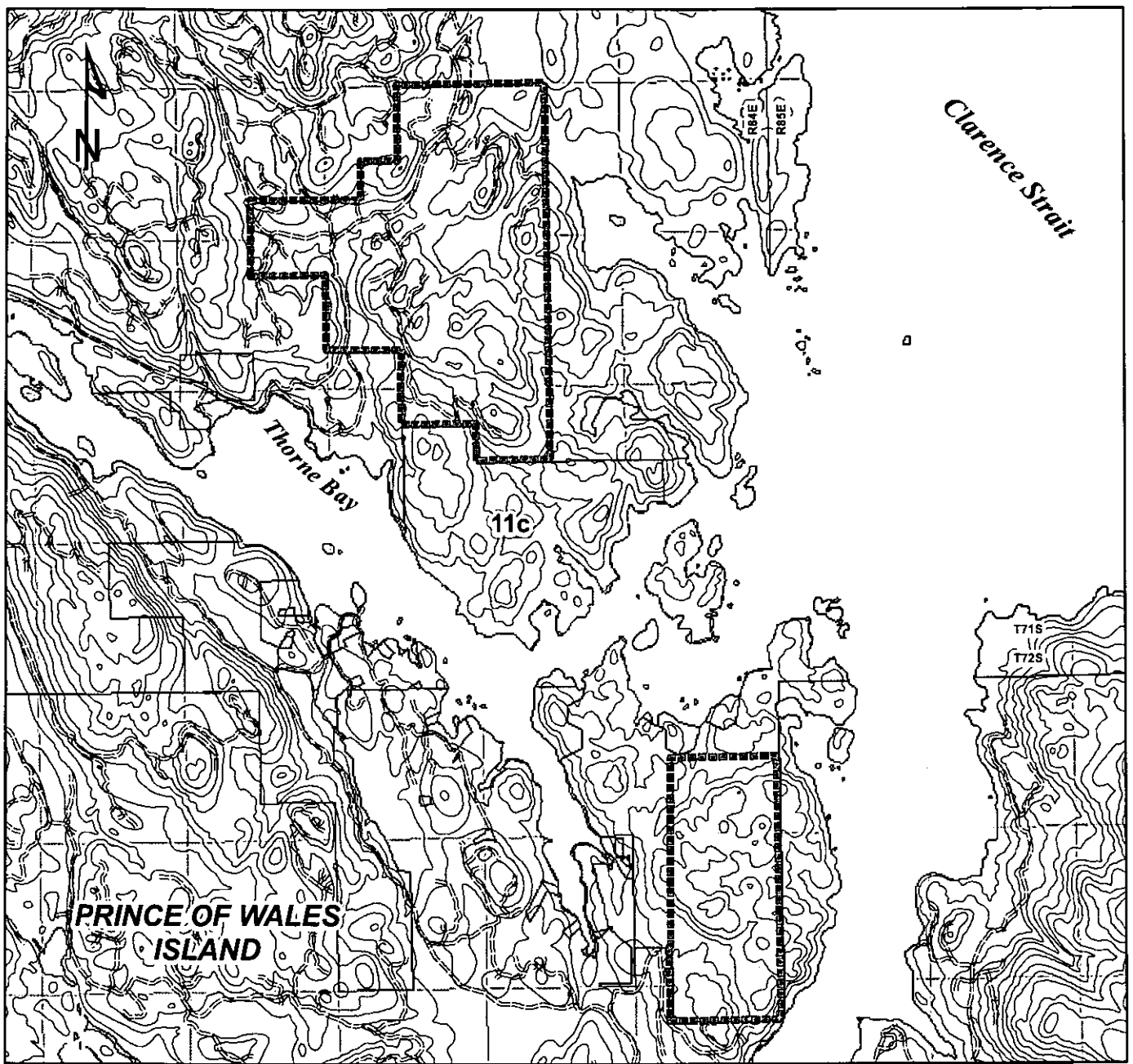
**Legend**

-  Proposed State Forest
-  GU
-  Disposable
-  Recreation
-  Habitat
-  Roads

**Proposed  
Southeast Alaska  
State Forest  
Control Lake**









**DIVISION OF FORESTRY**  
1/30/2009 gs



Contour Interval 100'

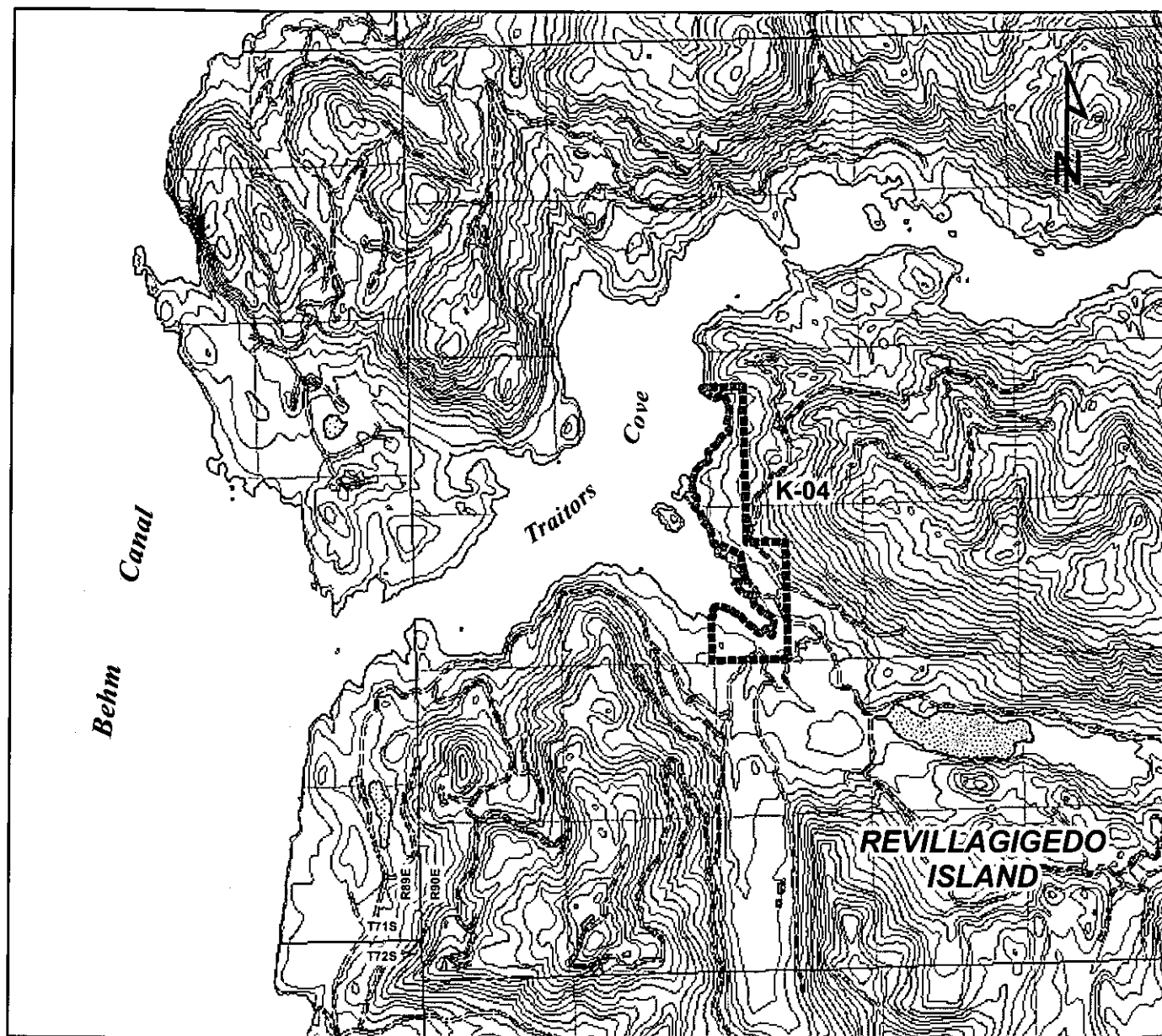
**Legend**

-  Proposed State Forest
-  GU
-  Disposable
-  Recreation
-  Habitat
-  Roads

**Proposed  
Southeast Alaska  
State Forest  
Thorne Bay**



**DIVISION OF FORESTRY**  
1/19/2009










0 0.5 1 1.5 2 Miles

Contour Interval 100'

1 inch equals 1 miles

**Legend**

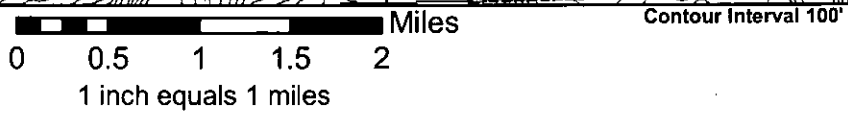
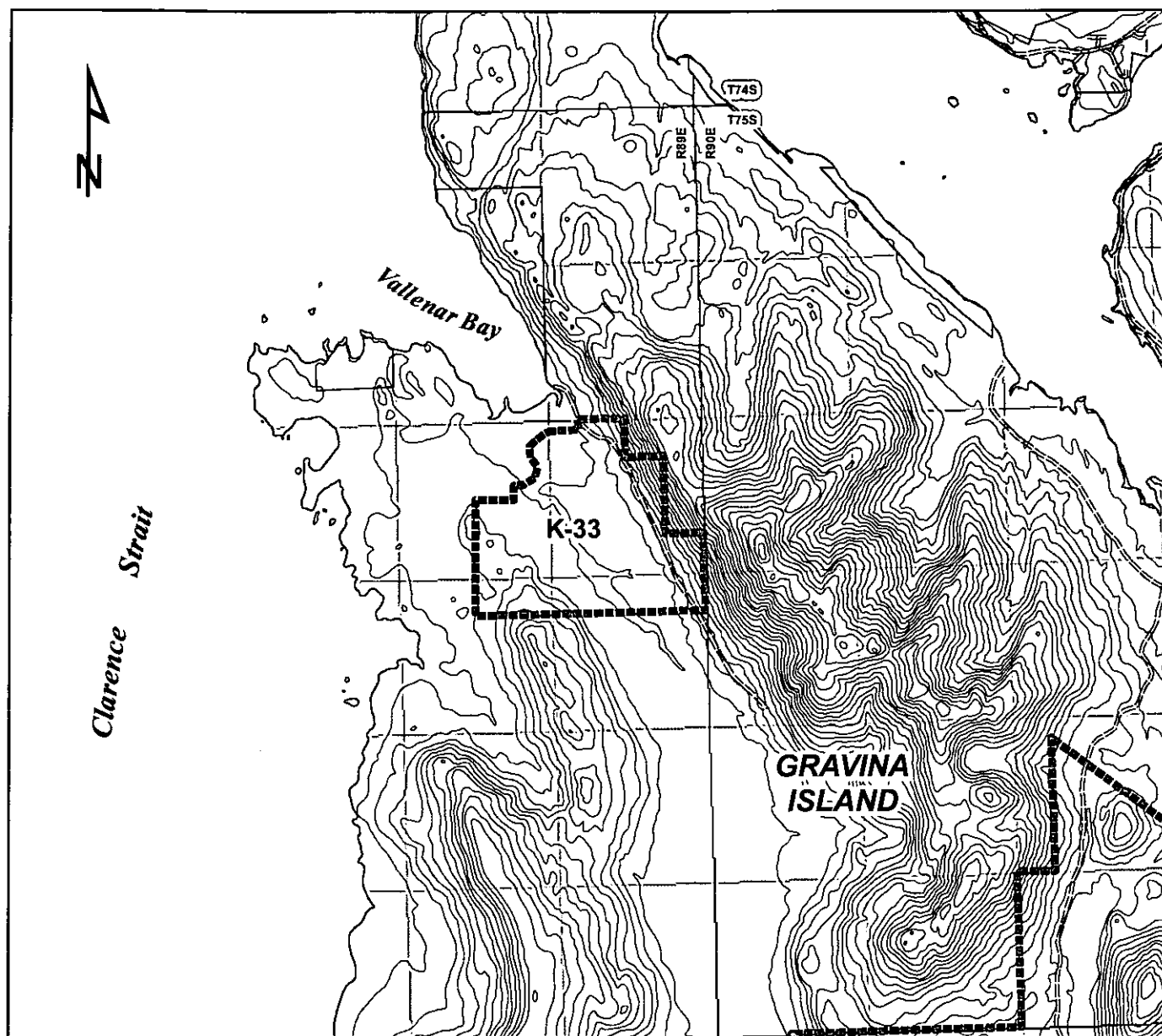
-  Proposed State Forest
-  Roads
-  GU
-  Disposable
-  Recreation
-  Habitat
-  Lakes

**Proposed  
Southeast Alaska  
State Forest  
Traitors Cove**



**DIVISION OF FORESTRY**

2/09/2009 gs

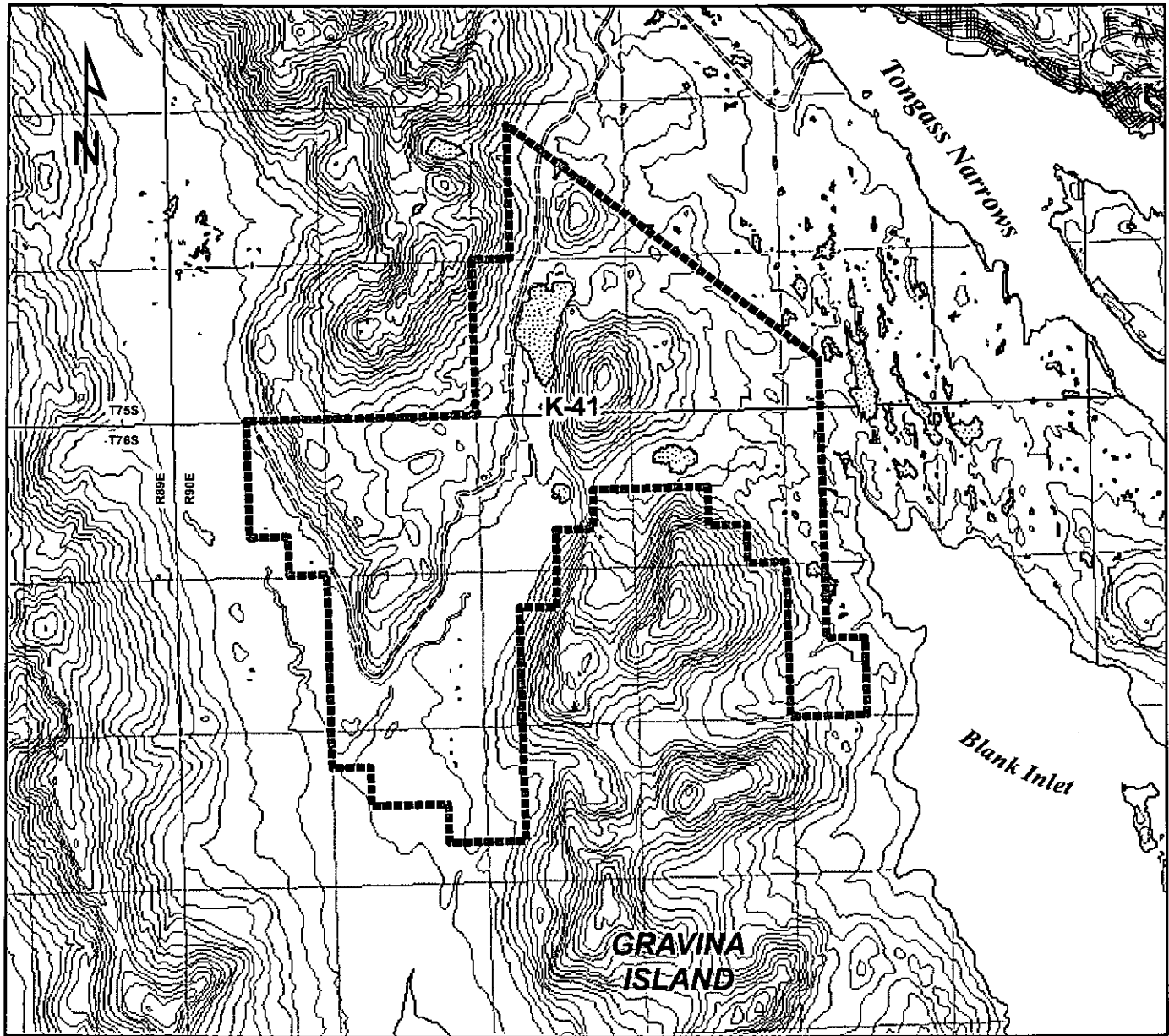


Legend	
	Proposed State Forest
	GU
	Disposable
	Recreation
	Habitat
	Roads

**Proposed  
Southeast Alaska  
State Forest  
Gravina (Vallenar)**









**DIVISION OF FORESTRY**  
2/05/2008 gs



0 0.5 1 1.5 2 Miles  
 1 inch equals 1 miles  
 Contour Interval 100'

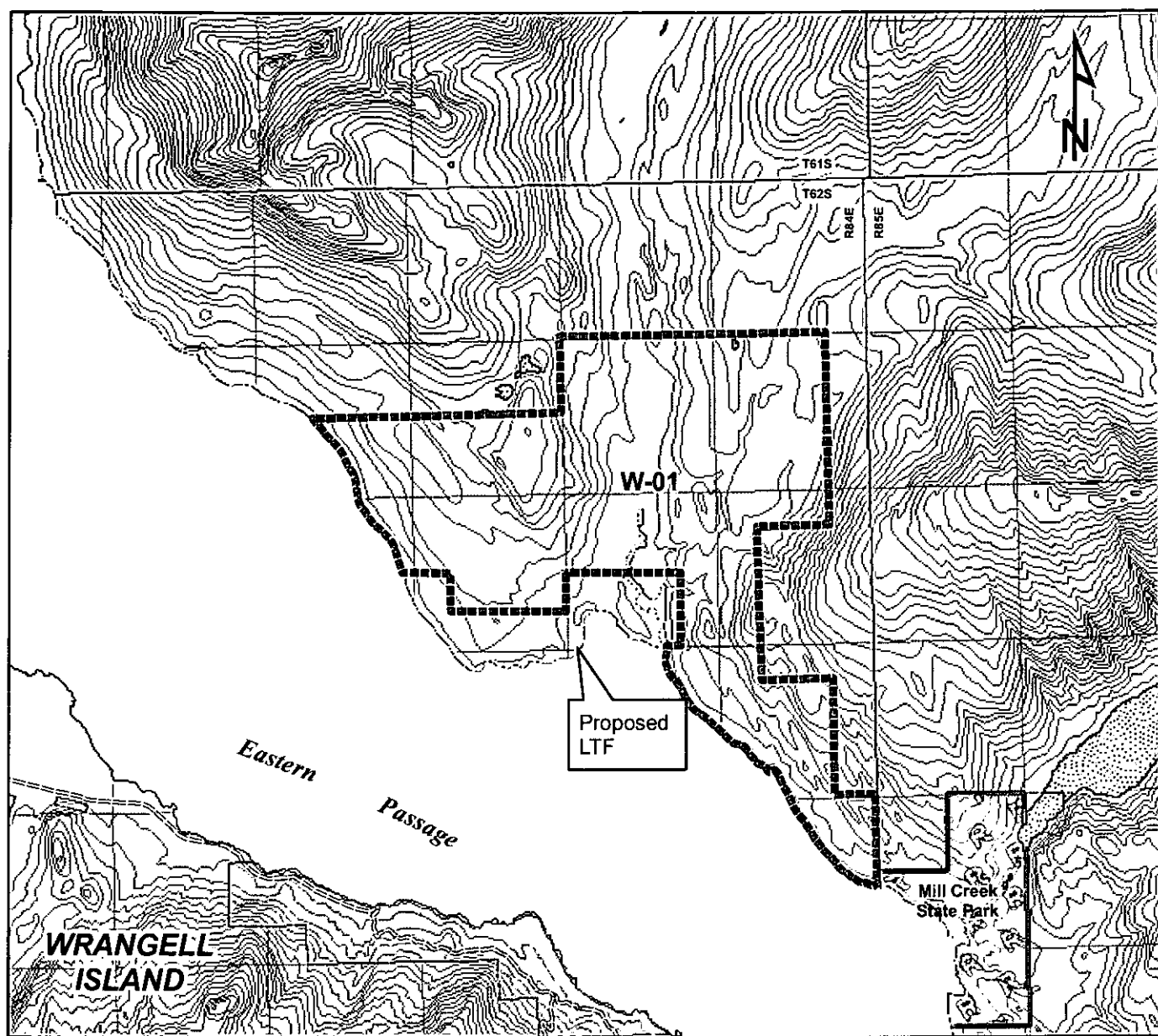
**Legend**

-  Proposed State Forest
-  GU
-  Disposable
-  Recreation
-  Habitat
-  Roads

**Proposed  
 Southeast Alaska  
 State Forest  
 Gravina (Bostwick)**











**DIVISION OF FORESTRY**  
 12/03/2008 gs



0 0.4 0.8 1.2 1.6 Miles  
1 inch equals 1 miles

Contour Interval 100'

**Legend**

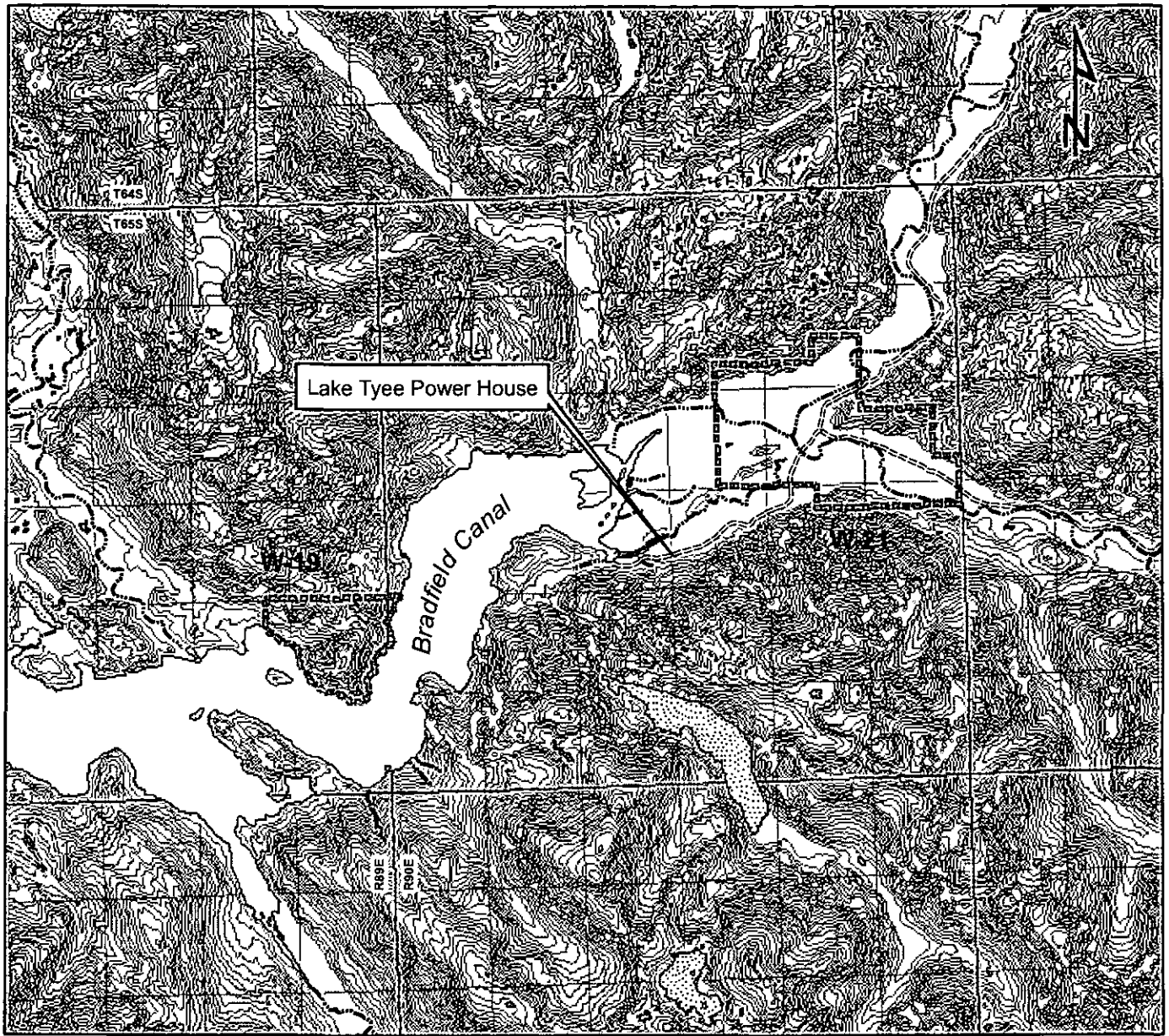
-  Proposed State Forest
-  State Park
-  GU
-  Disposable
-  Recreation
-  Habitat
-  lakes
-  Roads

**Proposed  
Southeast Alaska  
State Forest  
Crittenden Creek**



**DIVISION OF FORESTRY**









1/19/09 gs



0 1 2 3 4 5 Miles Contour Interval 100'

1 inch equals 1.6 miles

**Legend**

-  Proposed State Forest
-  GU
-  Disposable
-  Recreation
-  Habitat
-  Lakes
-  Cataloged Streams
-  Roads

**Proposed  
Southeast Alaska  
State Forest  
Bradfield Area**



**DIVISION OF FORESTRY**

1/21/09 gs

## Shalon Szymanski

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**From:** jack slaght [jackslaght@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 29, 2010 1:52 PM  
**To:** Shalon Szymanski  
**Subject:** H.B. 162

To: Senate Resources Chair, Lesil McGuire, and Members of the Senate Resources Committee.....here are my thoughts and testimony concerning House Bill 162:

It is my belief that Southeast Alaska needs to strive for rebuilding a diversified economy. Since arriving in Petersburg in 1993, I've watched the Southeast Alaska economy move away from being a diversified economy to becoming a specialized economy. In the past 20 yrs, a relentless assault on what remained of a forest products industry, by environmental groups, has effectively reduced that industry to almost nothing. Many citizens of Southeast Alaska have only heard the doom and gloom side of the timber harvest story and proponents of retaining a down-sized but stable forest products industry have remained relatively silent. After a couple of decades of this one-sided debate, many people now believe that environmental activists must be right. This is how carefully planned and executed propaganda works in a society. It is how Hitler and his Third Reich managed to take over Germany and most of Europe during WW11. They were fanatics. Since the mid 1990's, I've tried to be a voice of reason on occasion. I have not networked with other like-minded individuals when it comes to written or oral testimony. Networking has been a powerful tool used effectively by environmental activists. It is transparent when a group of activists read testimonials sharing many common threads at public meetings. They will claim to represent themselves and not a larger organization. Hmmmm.

For years I've warned others that we are taking a huge risk in creating the specialized regional economy that now exists in Southeast Alaska. I've seen, first hand, what can happen to a local economy when the only industry supporting that economy slows down or is destroyed. I've left a region and moved on when logging and saw milling and mining were stopped (I'd been employed as a logger and hard-rock driller). The same economic collapse can occur when mining or commercial fishing and processing come to a screeching halt. Currently, only fishing and processing and some tourism exist in the Petersburg area. Throughout Southeast Alaska that formula exists. Thankfully, some mining is still being done. In a recent article in the *Petersburg Pilot*, several local business owners were interviewed and they expressed concern over how the closure of Trident Seafoods this season will negatively impact their businesses and the local economy.

We are starting to see warning signs that commercial fishermen and processors will be dealing with new challenges as economic and environmental conditions develop in the coastal Alaska region. There will be increased competition for ocean resources as time advances. No one knows how future energy costs will affect fishing and processing. Again, how will our regional economy, heavily dependant on fishing and processing, fare in the years and decades ahead?

Now back to the topic of the doom and gloom of timber harvesting. I've wondered for many years how there could have been record salmon runs and harvests in the 1990's, following a couple of decades of record timber harvesting in Southeast Alaska--when those timber harvests were supposed to have completely wiped out fish and wildlife habitat. Hmmmm. I grew up in a logging community and culture and spent many years, as a young man, working in timber towns and logging camps in five western states and Alaska. I've read as much as I could about forest management and ecosystem management practices and continue to be amazed by the lack of knowledge and belief in misinformation many citizens express. Much of this misinformation is intentionally distributed by radical environmental groups. I say lets grow up! We need to begin to take pride in how well we can manage our natural resources. I'm in support of House Bill 162 for the reasons I've stated. We need to take a

more mature look at how we can benefit from utilizing the natural resources of Southeast Alaska.

The US Forest Service is so tied up in knots by environmental restrictions and litigation these days, they are not producing timber sales necessary to insure survival of the remaining sawmills in Southeast Alaska. When they have put forth timber sales of any significant size, environmental groups have immediately accused the Forest Service of operating in the red and made claims that the timber industry is heavily subsidized by the tax payers. There are reasons for that:

1. A very sizable staff of government workers and scientists employed by the USFS specifically to use sound science in the process of producing timber sales.
2. Litigation.

It has been a very interesting game. However, that game could eventually have a negative effect on the Southeast economy. If the specialized economy of Southeast Alaska should collapse at some point in the future, will the architects of that economy (environmental groups) be held accountable? Of course not!

In addition to the passing of House Bill 162, I propose that a program should be established to educate citizens on how we can use our natural resources wisely, without destroying fish and wildlife habitat. I'm convinced that sound science will allow us to do exactly that. The resources include: seafood, minerals, oil & gas, timber, ocean energy and so on. Alaska should become a leader in moving away from the doom and gloom dark age we've all been living in. Alaska should demonstrate for the rest of our nation how we can manage our resources wisely without destroying habitat.

It should be a source of pride, rather than a source of constant arguing and turmoil.

I have great admiration for Governor Parnell. He has shown courage in taking a position on retaining a forest products industry in Alaska. That is a political hot potato many leaders would not care to touch. In truth, all the ideas and opinions I've expressed are my own and I've not networked with others. I care enough about the economic future of Alaska, I've decided to stick my neck out and call a spade a spade. House Bill 162 is a good beginning for restoration of a stable Southeast Alaska economy. Thank you for taking my testimony!

Sincerely,

Jack Slaght, Petersburg, Alaska