

Appendix F: Recreation

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KATLIAN BAY ROAD

Recreation Resource Report

20 August 2016

Prepared for:
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& Public Facilities**
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Table of Contents

1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1	Introduction.....	1
1.2	Location.....	1
1.3	Purpose and Need	2
1.4	Proposed Action	2
1.5	Area Description.....	7
1.6	Regulatory and Management Framework	7
2	BASELINE CONDITIONS	15
3	ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES	21
3.1	Effects under the Proposed Action Alternative	21
3.2	Effects under the No Action Alternative.....	25
4	AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION, MITIGATION, AND AUTHORIZATIONS.....	27
5	REFERENCES.....	29

Tables

Table 1:	Recreation Impacts from the Proposed Action: Katlian Bay Road Project	22
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Figures

Figure 1:	Katlian Bay Project Location	3
Figure 2:	Katlian Bay Road Day Use Area	3
Figure 3:	Watersheds	9
Figure 4:	Forest Service Land use designation and OHV use areas	11
Figure 5:	USFS Recreation opportunity spectrum and existing recreational uses	17

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List of Acronyms

ADF&G	Alaska Department of Fish and Game
DOT&PF	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
ft	feet
Forest Plan	Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan
Forest Service	United States Forest Service
LTF	log transfer facility
LUD	Land Use Designations
MP	milepost
mph	miles per hour
MVUM	Motor Vehicle Use Map
OHV	off-highway vehicle
ROS	Recreational Opportunity Spectrum
Shee Atiká	Shee Atiká, Incorporated
USFS	United States Forest Service

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) proposes a state-funded project (Katlian Bay Road) for construction of a new road on Baranof Island in the vicinity of Katlian Bay. The Katlian Bay Road Project (Proposed Action) would consist of approximately 8.8 miles of new single-lane, aggregate-surfaced road with 3 bridge crossings, and 0.6 miles of off-highway vehicle (OHV) trail. The road would begin at the northern end of Halibut Point Road (near Starrigavan Recreation Area), extend east along the south shoreline of Katlian Bay, cross the Katlian River, and terminate about 2 miles east of the Katlian Bay estuary.

Temporary construction access would include using a portion of a National Forest System (NFS) Road No. 7579 and NFS Road No. 75797 within Shee Atiká, Incorporated (Shee Atiká) lands, use of the Shee Atiká log transfer facility (LTF) in Katlian Bay, and construction of a bridge over Coxe River on a new spur to NFS Road No. 7579.

This recreation resource report was prepared to support the DOT&PF in its preparation of the Katlian Bay Road Environmental Document. It describes and analyzes the recreational resources and expected recreation modifications by the Proposed Action on lands crossed by the proposed road.

1.2 Location

The Katlian Bay Road Project would traverse lands owned and/or managed by the State of Alaska, National Forest System (NFS) lands, Shee Atiká (surface), and Sealaska (subsurface) (Figure 1). The project is located in Township 55 South, Range 63 East, Section 2 and 3; Township 54 South, Range 63 East, Sections 25, 26, 34, and 35; and Township 54 South, Range 64 East, Sections 21, 22, 28, 29, and 30. Starting at the end of Halibut Point Road, which is 7 miles northeast of Sitka, the Katlian Bay Road Project crosses three land ownerships as described below:

- Milepost (MP) 0.00 to 1.23: State of Alaska
- MP 1.23 to 3.65: NFS, Tongass National Forest, Sitka Ranger District
- MP 3.65 to 9.20: Shee Atiká (surface) and Sealaska (subsurface).

Within NFS lands, the road corridor is located in a right-of-way easement as identified in a June 15, 2005 Memorandum of Understanding that was signed by the U.S. Forest Service (referred to as Forest Service or USFS), Alaska Department of Natural Resources, and State of Alaska (Forest Service et al. 2005). The right-of-way easement is for 55 years and is renewable. Its intent is to include those rights necessary for DOT&PF to conduct engineering and all other activities necessary or incident to highway and utility planning, design, environmental review, construction, operation, and maintenance.

The project area encompasses those lands and activities within 0.5 mile of the Proposed Action.

1.3 Purpose and Need

The City and Borough of Sitka has a road system that currently provides limited passenger vehicle access for recreation and subsistence activities. Sitka has a shortage of developable material sources for future projects on its existing road system. The purpose of the proposed Katlian Bay Road Project is to provide:

- Increased recreational and subsistence opportunities on Baranof Island within NFS, managed lands of the Tongass National Forest, Sitka Ranger District;
- Access to Native Corporation (Shee Atiká, Incorporated) and Sealaska lands; and
- Opportunity for development of new material sources on state, federal, and Native Corporation lands.

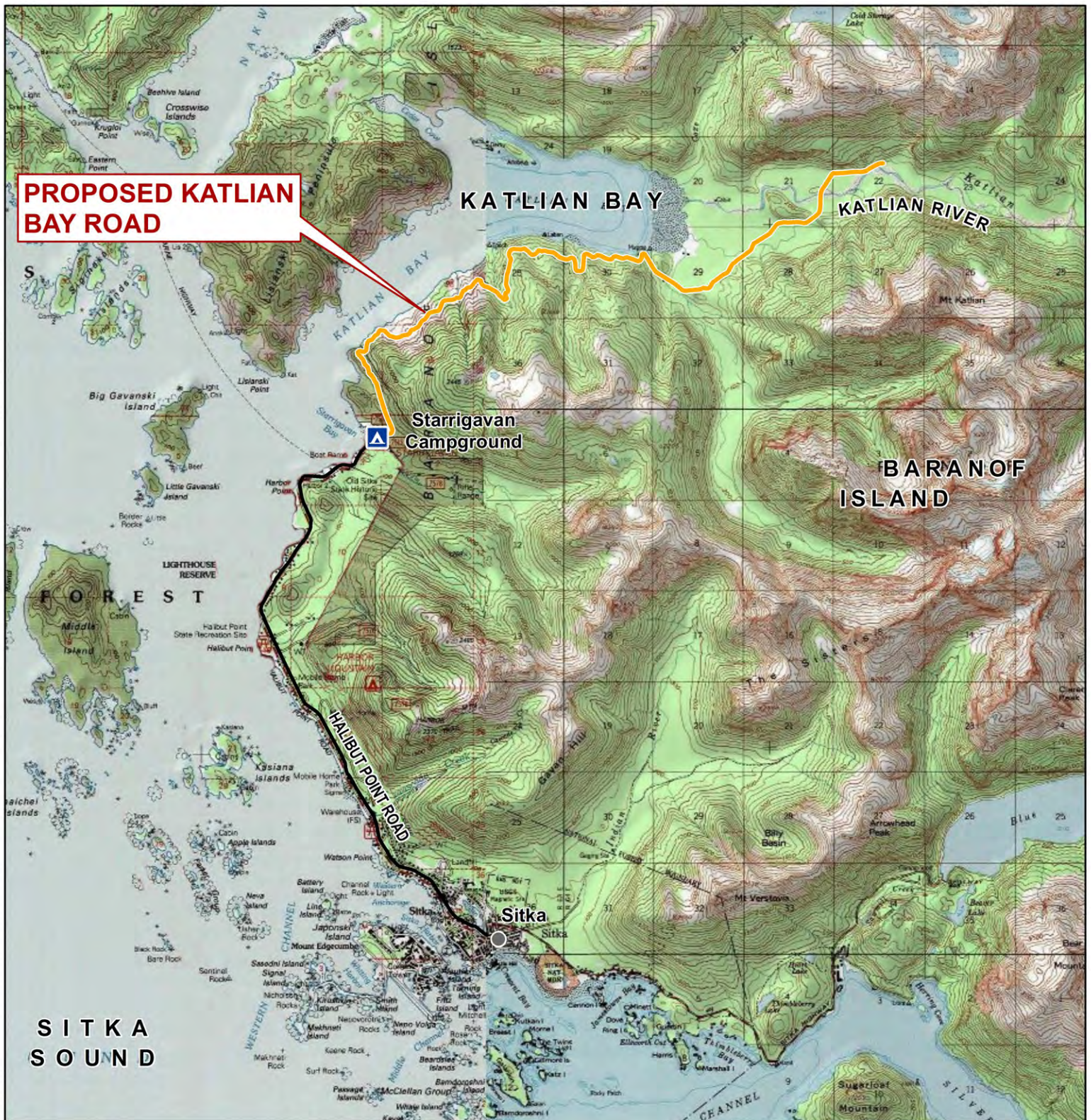
1.4 Proposed Action

The Proposed Action was selected to avoid steep and unstable slopes, marine areas with high ecological values, wetlands, and expansive river crossings. The proposed road alignment was developed based on field data collected during 2014 and 2015 by engineers and scientists.

As planned, the Proposed Action would include:

- 8.8 miles of a new aggregate-surfaced, single-lane road starting from the end of Halibut Point Road and terminating within the Katlian Bay watershed;
- A speed limit of 25 miles per hour (mph) and 2-foot shoulders;
- Use of NFS roads and LTF for temporary construction access and connection to OHV trails;
- Intervisible road turnouts;
- Scenic overlooks of Katlian Bay; and
- Intended permanent use, although winter maintenance is not planned (K. Karpstein, pers. comm., DOT&PF, Design Group Chief).

The new road would terminate with a day use area (Figure 2) and OHV trail connection to NFS Trail No. 3175797. This day use area would include a turnaround, trailhead parking, and picnic area with a fire ring.



PROPOSED KATLIAN BAY ROAD

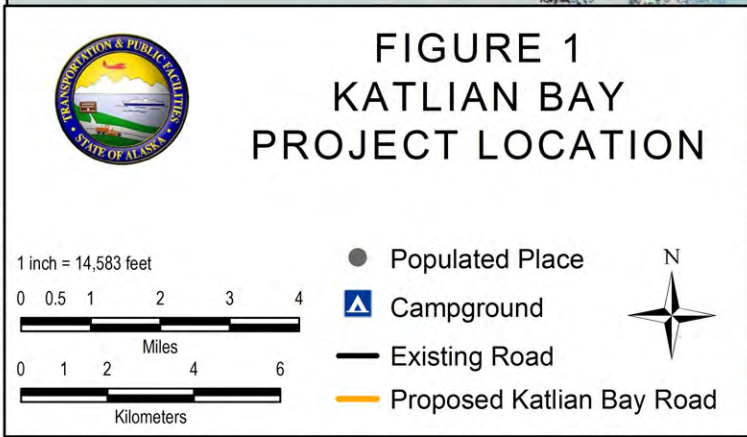
KATLIAN BAY

KATLIAN RIVER

Starrigavan Campground

BARANOF ISLAND

SITKA SOUND



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**KATLIAN BAY ROAD
CONSTRUCTION**

FIGURE 2 - Katlian Bay
Road day use area



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The project would cross primarily forested habitat. From initial field studies, the following road components would be required:

- 248 corrugated aluminum pipe (CAP) culverts ranging in diameter from 2 feet to 12 feet;
- 5 structural pipe arches (SPA) culverts with spans ranging from 6 feet to 26 feet;
- 14 structural plate pipe arch (SPPA) culverts with spans ranging from 6 feet 8 inches to 19 feet 6 inches; and
- 3 bridges consisting of pre-engineered structures with spans of approximately 66, 120, and 150 feet.

There will be no winter maintenance of the Katlian Bay Road during winter months. The project is planned for a 2-year construction period beginning in 2018.

1.5 Area Description

The Proposed Action is located within three watersheds: Sitka Sound–Frontal Pacific Ocean (includes Starrigavan Creek), Katlian Bay–Frontal Sitka Sound, and Katlian River (USGS 2004) (Figure 3). The Proposed Action commences at the north central portion of the Sitka Sound–Frontal Pacific Ocean watershed near Starrigavan Creek. This area has private, state, and NFS ownership. The area has two primary access roads—Halibut Point Road and Nelson Logging Road—and is mainly forested. Previous modifications to the area include Forest Service logging, private residences and businesses, and recreational development. The Starrigavan Recreation Area is a joint management venture between the Forest Service and Alaska State Parks and includes pedestrian and OHV trails, a camping area, and the Old Sitka State Historic Site. The recreation area offers 2.25 miles of loop trails adjacent to 34 campsites, 1 public recreation log cabin, and 6 picnic sites.

The area where the Proposed Action crosses the Katlian Bay–Frontal Sitka Sound watershed includes Alaska State, Shee Atiká, and NFS–managed lands. There are no developed facilities within this area, except previously designated unmaintained reserved road easements. Portions of the area were previously harvested. The area also includes lands where temporary construction access would be located.

The Katlian River watershed includes lands owned by Shee Atiká, as well as NFS lands. Similar to the Katlian Bay–Frontal Sitka Sound watershed, there are no developed facilities within this area except previously designated unmaintained reserved road easements. Portions of the area were previously harvested, which occurred in the early 1960s resulted in the removal of about 120 million board feet of timber from about 3,270 acres in the lower Katlian valley (Sitka Tribe of Alaska and Forest Service 2003).

1.6 Regulatory and Management Framework

Alaska State lands are managed under the Alaska Department of Natural Resources Northern Southeast Area Plan (State of Alaska 2015). The Northern Southeast Area Plan designates areas located along Halibut Point Road close to the Proposed Action as Public Facilities-Retain and/or Public Recreation and Tourism-Undeveloped. The retain classification is defined as sites that are reserved for a specific infrastructure to serve state interests; the undeveloped classification is defined as areas that offer or have a high potential for dispersed recreation or

tourism and where desirable recreation conditions are scattered or widespread rather than localized.

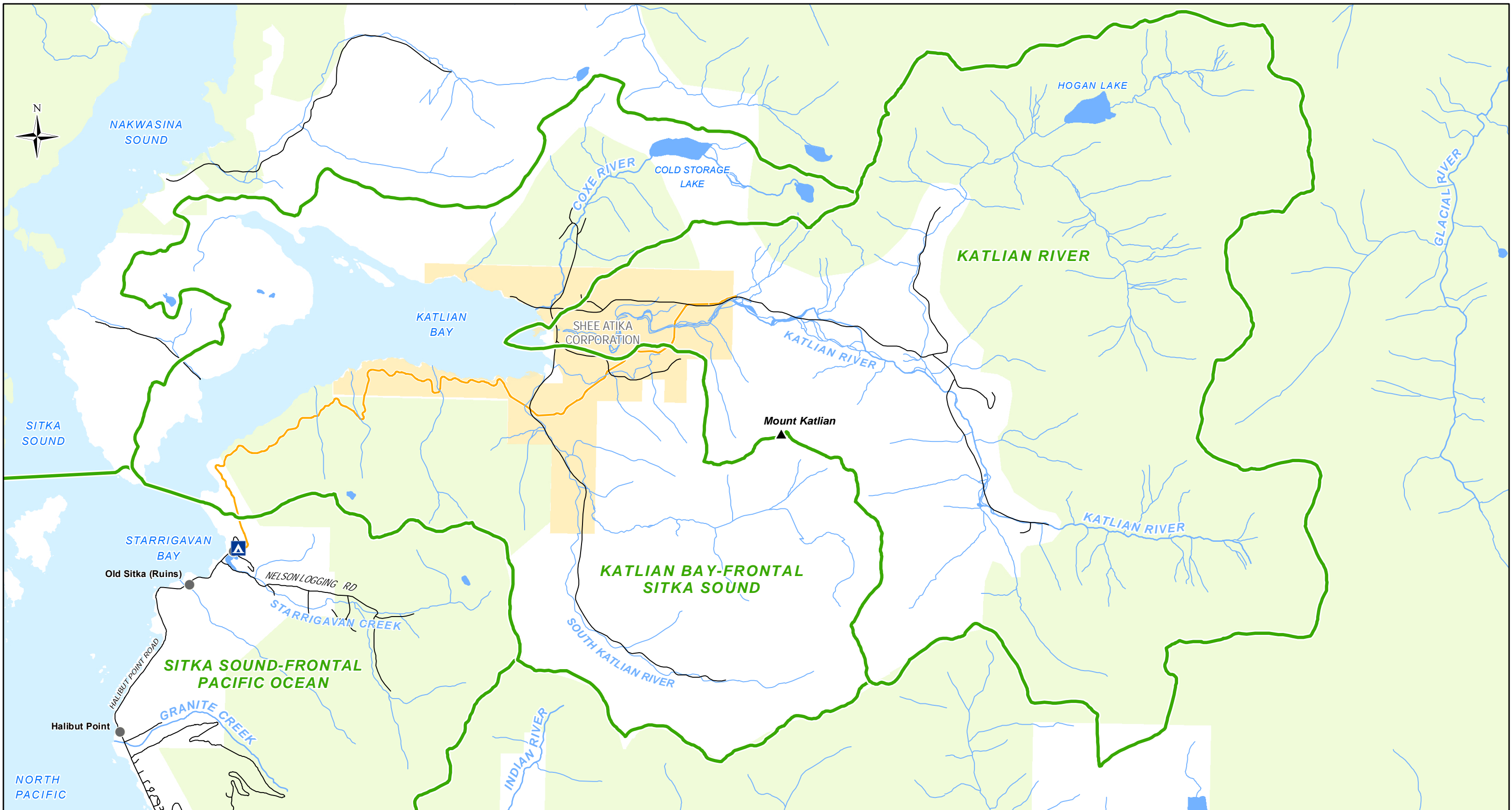
Shee Atiká surface lands are owned by Shee Atiká, Incorporated, which is an urban corporation organized pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, as amended. Shee Atiká's mission is to preserve and enhance their culture for all generations of shareholders (primarily of Tlingit descent) and to provide benefits to shareholders consistently and on an equitable basis. Subsurface lands below Shee Atiká lands are owned by Sealaska, which is a Native American–owned institution representing Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian people. Through the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act approximately 675,000 acres of privately managed lands (including area within Katlian Bay) remain in Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian ownership. Sealaska provides economic, cultural, and social benefits to current and future generations of shareholders via businesses, investments, and partnerships.


NFS lands are located within the Sitka Ranger District of the Tongass National Forest. These lands are governed by the standards and guidelines of the Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) (Forest Service 2008). For the Katlian Bay area, there is no local Forest Service recreation management plan beyond the Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) (Forest Service 2016; A. Lapalme (c), pers. comm., Sitka Ranger District, Recreation, Lands, Minerals, and Special Uses staff).

The NFS land crossed by the Proposed Action has a Land Use Designation (LUD) of Semi-Remote Recreation (Figure 4). The location where the Proposed Action would terminate is adjacent to NFS lands with an LUD of Timber Management. Forest Service LUD classifications are affiliated with the Forest Service Recreation Opportunities Spectrum (ROS). The ROS is used to designate the appropriate recreational opportunities in an area and considers factors that impact a user's experience of a place. These factors include activity type, access method, social encounter frequency, remoteness, and extent of management. Defining recreation opportunities assists Forest Service recreation managers in creating and maintaining the appropriate recreation experience that suits various types of land and visitors. The ROS continuum characterizes recreation opportunities in terms of setting, activity, and experience.

The subclass of Semi-Remote Recreation is characterized by:

- General management for semi-primitive ROS is implemented, but concentrated recreation and tourism development may cause the ROS setting to become Roaded Natural, Roaded Modified, or Rural.
- Designated motorized routes for OHVs are allowed.
- Use of snow machines, boats, and aircraft in non-motorized areas for traditional uses is permitted.
- Small-scale rustic facilities are permitted (Forest Service 2008).





KATLIAN BAY ROAD CONSTRUCTION

FIGURE 3 - WATERSHEDS

● Populated Place	■ Tongass National Forest
▲ Starrigavan Day Use Area	■ Shee Atika Corporation
— Proposed Katlian Bay Road	■ Hydrologic Unit Code 12
— Secondary Road	
— Watercourse	

0 0.5 1 1 inch = 5,500 feet 2


Miles

0 0.5 1 2 3

Kilometers

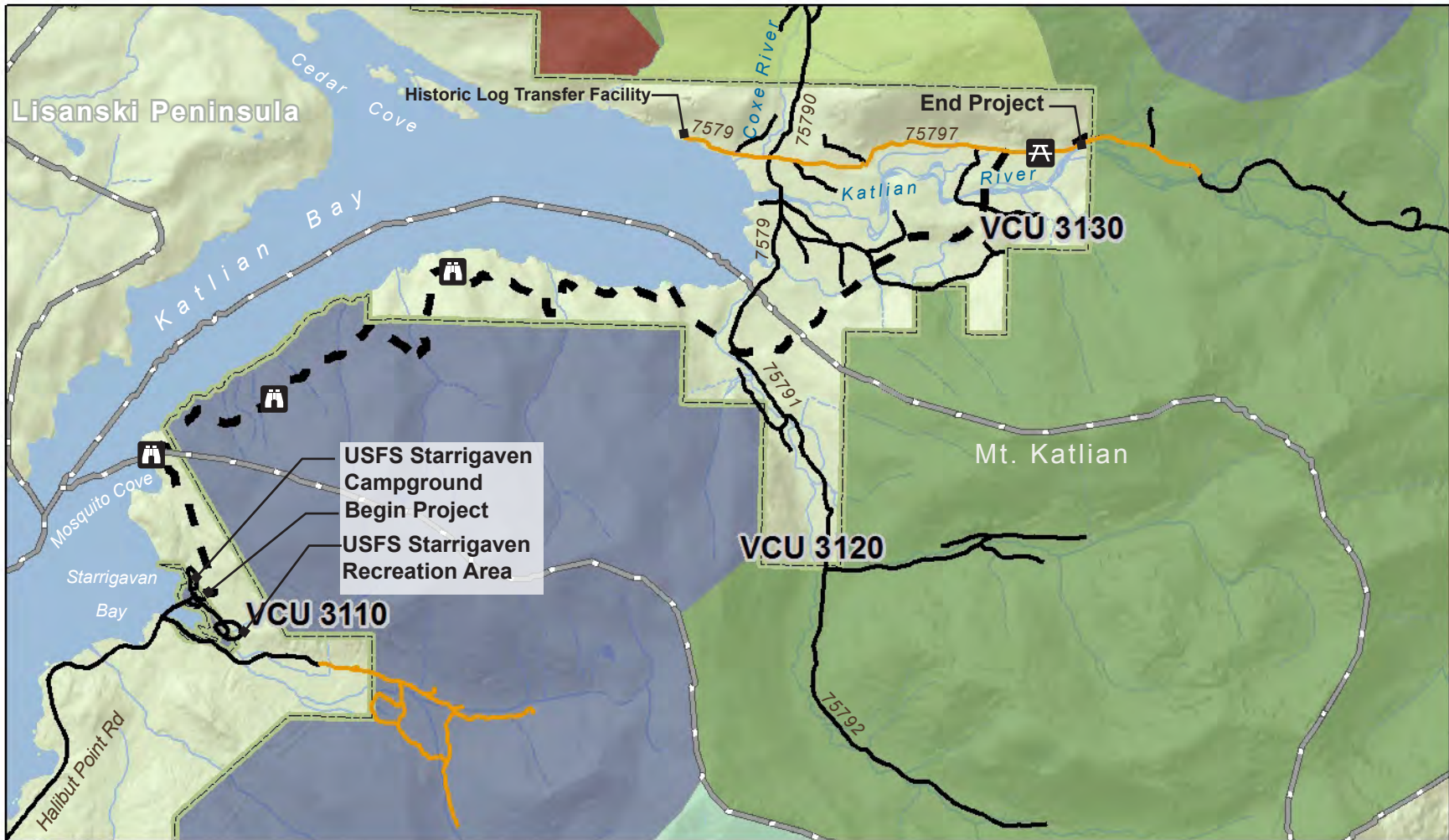
Scale: 1:66,000

Source:
 U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), 2004
 Watershed Boundary Dataset (WBD) Version 2 (1:24,000)
 - Subcommittee on Spatial Water Data
 - Advisory Committee on Water Information (ACWI)
 - Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC)



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**KATLIAN BAY ROAD
CONSTRUCTION**

Figure 4 - USFS Land use designations and ATV use areas

- Existing Roads
- Proposed Route
- Visual Comparison Unit*
- Tongass National Forest*
- Potential Viewpoint
- Potential Day Use Area

Land Use Designations*

- Semi-Remote Recreation
- Timber Management
- Municipal Watershed
- Old-Growth Habitat
- Modified Landscap

0 0.5 1 Miles



* Data obtained directly from Tongass National Forest

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The ROS subclass of Semi-Remote Recreation contains six classes: Primitive, Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized, Semi-Primitive Motorized, Roded Natural, Rural, Modern Urban. The Proposed Action crosses an area classified as Roded Modified, which is a subclass of Roded Natural (Forest Service 1979), because of previous timber harvesting in the area (A. Lapalme (b), pers. comm., Sitka Ranger District, Recreation, Lands, Minerals, and Special Uses staff). Roded Modified is similar to the Roded Natural setting, except this area has been heavily modified (roads or recreation facilities). This class still offers opportunity to have a high degree of interaction with the natural environment and to have moderate challenge and risk and to use outdoor skills.

Future additional guidance specific to snow machine use is currently being developed by the Forest Service as a national snow machine plan, with an expected release date of 2015 (A. Lapalme (c), pers. comm., Sitka Ranger District, Recreation, Lands, Minerals, and Special Uses staff).

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2 BASELINE CONDITIONS

Provided below is a description of the existing recreational resources within the project area. The existing conditions are consistent with both the LUD and ROS classifications.

2.1 General

The current recreational opportunities within the project area are generally rustic and remote in nature. There is minimal recreational use on state lands within the project area outside of developed campgrounds and recreation areas. The Starrigavan Recreation Area extends onto state land and is jointly managed by the state and the Forest Service. OHVs are permitted on Forest Service designated OHV trails in the area, which begin on state land and are generally located on old Forest Service logging roads managed by the Forest Service (Forest Service 2015).

NFS lands include rustic facilities and a managed use area (day and overnight use) at the Starrigavan Recreation Area and Campground near the end of Halibut Point Road (Figure 1). There are no developed recreation facilities on adjacent NFS lands, and the existing campground would be classified as primitive.

Shee Atiká lands have no developed recreation facilities. Access is available only with Shee Atiká's permission and presently occurs through old NFS non-maintained logging roads, the LTF in Katlian Bay, and boat mooring at Katlian Bay anchorages (Figure 4). Use of Shee Atiká lands is open to shareholders and non-shareholders for hunting, fishing, hiking, berry picking, and camping (P. McConnell, pers. comm., Shee Atiká, Incorporated, Chief Operating Officer).

The Sitka Ranger District has limited information on recreation use in the project area. Thus, existing data described below are based on best professional judgment, interviews, and anecdotal evidence.

2.2 Hiking

The Starrigavan Recreation Area and its trails provide the majority of developed hiking opportunities in the project area (Figure 5). The Starrigavan Recreation Area allows year-round use, although vehicle access is limited to the period extending from April 30 to September 16. Outside of these dates, users must park outside of the gated road to gain access to the facilities (A. Lapalme (a), pers. comm., Sitka Ranger District, Recreation, Lands, Minerals, and Special Uses staff).

Developed hiking on Shee Atiká and NFS lands is limited to use of reserved road easements (NFS Road Nos. 7579, 75791, and 75797), as well as NFS Trail No. 3175797 (Figure 3). Use is low on these trails due to their remote location and difficult access (boat access from Katlian Bay). The entire area is open to back-country hiking without the use of trails.

2.3 Biking

Non-motorized biking is allowed on the reserved road easements in the project area (Figure 4). However, these easements are not maintained and include areas of wash-out. Use of these easements for biking is low due to difficult access (boat access from Katlian Bay) (B. Martin,

pers. comm., LEI Incorporated; P. McConnell, pers. comm., Shee Atiká, Incorporated, Chief Operating Officer, Sitka, Alaska). Non-motorized biking is also allowed in the Starrigavan Recreation Area.

2.4 Fishing, Hunting, and Trapping

The project area has no developed fishing facilities but is open to remote recreational fishing (and on Shee Atiká lands with the permission of Shee Atiká). Species harvested include pink salmon, chum salmon, coho salmon, and Dolly Varden (DOT&PF 2009). The project area is open to remote recreational hunting and trapping (again with permission of Shee Atiká on their lands) with no developed facilities. Species harvested include black-tail deer, mountain goats, brown bear, and ducks (DOT&PF 2009). Due to its remoteness and lack of roaded access, these recreational activities are likely limited in the project area.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) regulates recreational fishing and hunting. Currently, shareholders and non-shareholders are permitted to hunt and fish on NFS lands and on Shee Atiká lands (as long as they have advance written permission from Shee Atiká).

2.5 Berry Picking

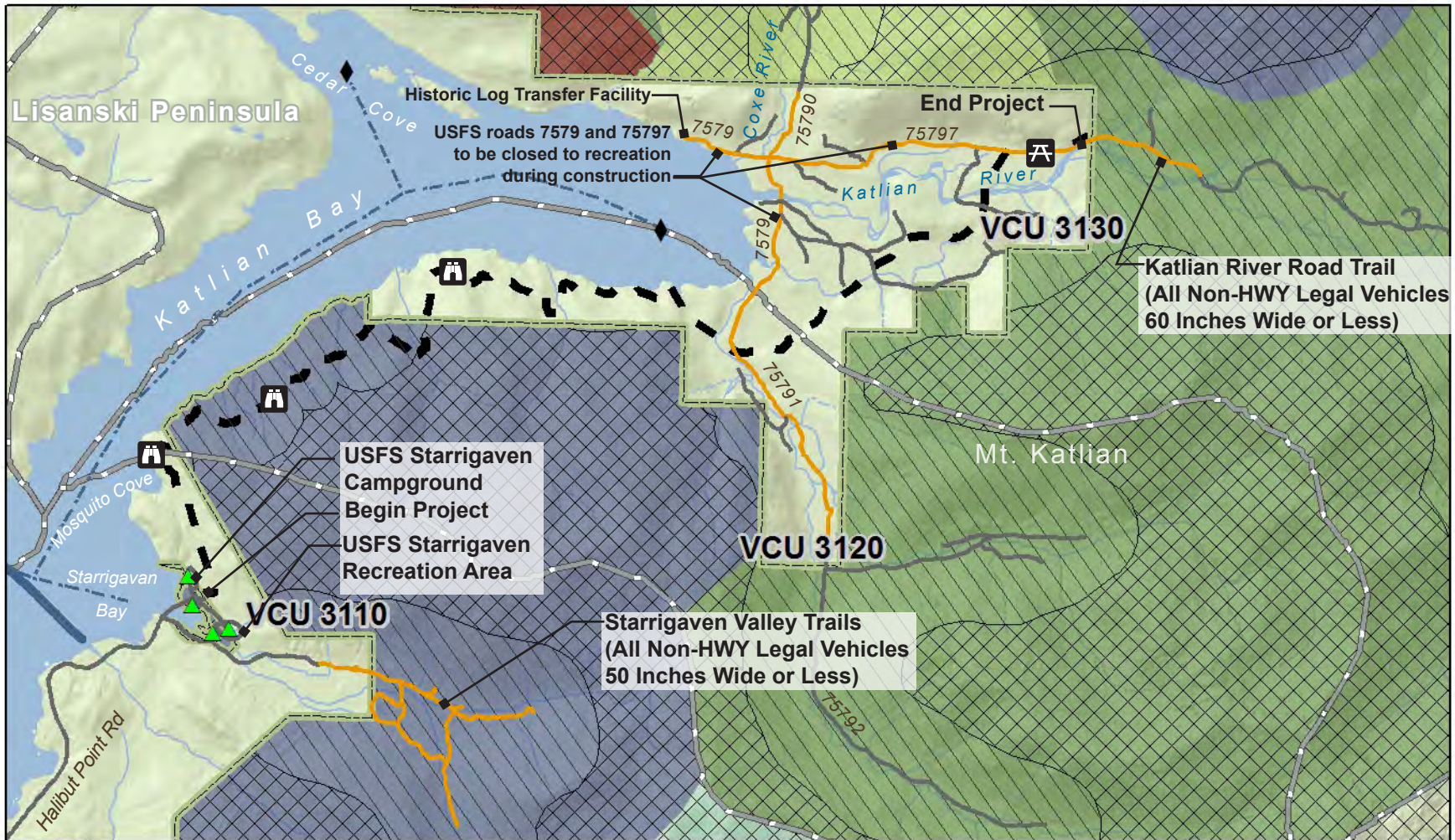
With Shee Atiká's advance written permission, Shee Atiká's lands within the project area are open to remote berry picking, with no developed facilities. The remainder of the project area is also open to berry picking. Species harvested include huckleberries and wild currant. Due to limited access to the project area, berry picking as an activity likely has low use.

2.6 Scenic Viewing

Katlian Bay is listed as a visual priority route and use area in Appendix F of the Forest Plan (Forest Service 2008) with boat anchorages and small boat routes indicating opportunities for scenic viewing of the surrounding landscape (Figure 5). The only developed facility for scenic viewing in the project area is a bird-viewing deck at the Starrigavan Recreation Area.

2.7 Off-highway Vehicle

In addition to use of OHVs on the reserved road easements within Shee Atiká lands, OHVs are allowed on a small section (roughly 0.75 miles) of the Sitka Ranger District NFS Trail No. 3175797 based on the Forest Service MVUM (Forest Service 2016). NFS Trail No. 3175797 is not maintained and has areas of wash-out. For NFS lands, the MVUM requires that OHVs must be less than or equal to 60-inches wide. Per the Forest Plan, snow machines are allowed in Semi-remote LUDs for traditional activities (such as fishing, hunting, sightseeing, and hiking) when other motorized vehicles are prohibited (Forest Service 2008). However, during typical years, the lack of snow at this altitude prevents snow machine use. Due to the limited access to the OHV trails in the project area, use of these trails for OHVs is low.



**KATLIAN BAY ROAD
CONSTRUCTION**

Figure 5 - USFS Recreation opportunity spectrum and existing recreational uses

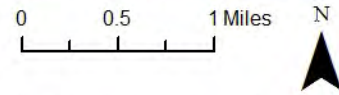
- Existing Roads
- Existing ATV Use
- Proposed Route
- Visual Comparison Unit*
- Tongass National Forest*
- Small Vessel (10')*
- Large Vessel (50')*
- Small Boat Anchorage*
- Campground*

Land Use Designations*

- Semi-Remote Recreation
- Timber Management
- Municipal Watershed
- Old-Growth Habitat
- Modified Landscap

Recreation Opportunity Spectrum

- RM - Rooded Modifie
- RN - Rooded Natural
- SPNM - Semi-Primitive Non - Motorized
- Potential Viewpoint
- Potential Day Use Area



* Data obtained directly from Tongass National Forest

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2.8 Picnicking and Camping

There is a developed picnic area at Starrigavan Recreation Area. Recreation facilities associated with Starrigavan Campground are provided on both sides of the Halibut Point Road, along with three overnight camping sites located along adjacent Sitka Sound estuary. The campground on the southeast side (estuary side) of the road includes 35 sites (including 2 group sites), 4 shelters, 1 cabin, and several vault toilets. One of the camping loops has hike-in tent sites only. Overall occupancy during the active camping season (May 1 through September 15) is 18 percent (A. Lapalme (a), pers. comm., Sitka Ranger District, Recreation, Lands, Minerals, and Special Uses staff). Typical users include campers who are travelling the Alaska Marine Highway as well as local residents. The Starrigavan Creek Cabin was reserved 223 nights in 2014 and had the highest use within the Sitka Ranger District (A. Lapalme (a), pers. comm., Sitka Ranger District, Recreation, Lands, Minerals, and Special Uses staff).

The Alaska State Parks Advisory Board in Sitka has proposed the construction of a hike-in public use cabin for rent at Mosquito Cove (Figure 4) near the Starrigavan Campground (A. Lapalme (a), pers. comm., Sitka Ranger District, Recreation, Lands, Minerals, and Special Uses staff). Backcountry camping is also an option on Shee Atiká (with written permission) and NFS lands; there are no developed camping facilities on these lands.

2.9 Permitted Outfitters/Guides

Five outfitters and/or guides reported using the Mosquito Cove and Katlian Bay area from 2010 through to 2014 (A. Lapalme (a), pers. comm., Sitka Ranger District, Recreation, Lands, Minerals, and Special Uses staff). The activities associated with outfitters and guides include hiking, freshwater fishing, deer hunting, and access to alpine areas for mountain goat hunting. One guide reported an average of 997 service days on the Mosquito Cove Trail annually (A. Lapalme (a), pers. comm., Sitka Ranger District, Recreation, Lands, Minerals, and Special Uses staff). There are currently no permitted outfitters or commercial guides using Shee Atiká lands without advance written permission from Shee Atiká (P. McConnell, pers. comm., Shee Atiká, Incorporated, Chief Operating Officer).

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3 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

3.1 Effects under the Proposed Action Alternative

The Proposed Action would have short-term construction effects and long-term operational effects. Short-term effects include those from construction access and related activities. Long-term effects are those that consist of operation and maintenance of the Proposed Action.

3.1.1 Recreation Opportunity Spectrum

Short-term Effects: The Proposed Action would be consistent with the LUD of Semi-Remote Recreation, which allows for conventional motorized use on roads, as well as social presence within a natural appearing environment. However, construction activities would be considered inconsistent with the LUD.

Long-term Effects: The Proposed Action would continue to be consistent with the LUD of Semi-Remote Recreation. The Proposed Action would meet the goals, objectives, and desired condition for this LUD. The LUD would also continue to be classified as currently classified (Roaded Modified and Roaded Natural) since conventional motorized use on roads would be the primary access into the area, and social encounters would be low to moderate on trails and moderate to high on roads.

3.1.2 General

Short-term Effects: During construction, there could be an increase in traffic, noise, and dust. Because existing recreation use of the Proposed Action corridor (which currently is only accessible by foot) is negligible, the impact to recreationists would be limited to the beginning of the project at the Starrigavan Campground. The aesthetics of the campground area could be impacted by the presence of construction machinery, fencing, clearing operations, and construction operations. These short-term effects could impact the quality of user experience during construction activities until the site is cleared and construction is completed. This may result in short-term dispersal of current users to new or different locations. These users may endure impacts, find another area, or delay their activities until construction is complete.

Long-term Effects: Access improvements would increase recreational opportunities in the project area. As a result, more recreationists would have the opportunity to enjoy the Katlian Bay area and a remote recreational experience. However, those recreationists searching for a solitary remote experience may be displaced further into the surrounding landscape or may relocate to a new area entirely. Until otherwise determined, the current access to existing logging roads on Shee Atiká lands would continue for shareholders and non-shareholders (P. McConnell, pers. comm., Shee Atiká, Incorporated, Chief Operating Officer).

Parking for all recreation activities would be available at the day use area at the project termination point. By opening new recreational use areas and facilities, demand for the day use facilities at Starrigavan Recreation Area could be reduced.

The use of Katlian Bay anchorage may be reduced due to the new roaded access into the project area. In addition, users of the anchorage may prefer a more solitary experience and use other anchorages that are farther from human activities.

Shareholders and non-shareholders are currently permitted to use Shee Atiká lands and this use is expected to continue into the foreseeable future. However, the Shee Atiká board has the right to change this policy (P. McConnell, pers. comm., Shee Atiká, Incorporated, Chief Operating Officer, Sitka, Alaska).

3.1.3 Hiking

Short-term Effects: During construction, hikers would be requested not to use the area where the Proposed Action is located so that their health and safety are protected. Because this area generally has no hiking or OHV trails and much of the area on NFS lands is near steep slopes, the impact would be negligible.

Long-term Effects: The Proposed Action would provide a new route for hikers and allow a higher level of access to the three watersheds where the Proposed Action is located (Table 1). The Proposed Action would provide the opportunity for hikers to hike areas farther inland from Katlian Bay, which currently has limited use. Hikers would also have the opportunity to more easily hike on reserved road easements. Thus, the proposed road would provide a new and higher level of hiking opportunity into the area. However, it is unknown whether these reserved road easements and NFS OHV trail would be maintained into the future. The Proposed Action would not affect existing parking at the Starrigavan Recreation Area.

Table 1: Recreation Impacts from the Proposed Action: Katlian Bay Road Project

Recreational Activity	No Action Alternative / Existing Conditions	Proposed Action Alternative: Long-Term Effects
General	Remote, few social interactions.	Improved and increased access, less remote, more social encounters.
Hiking Reserved Road Easements	Trails on existing reserved road easements, although access to these roads is limited to boat use in Katlian Bay.	Continued and increased opportunity to hike on reserved road easements and NFS lands. The Proposed Action would result in new land access to these easements and NFS lands.
Biking Reserved Road Easements	Limited to existing reserved road easements. Access must be by boat to the project area.	Continued and increased opportunity to bike on the NFS logging roads. New opportunity to bike on the new Katlian Bay Road.
Fishing, Hunting, and Trapping	Ongoing and managed by ADF&G. Allowed by Shee Atiká on their lands. Current fishing, hunting, and trapping opportunities limited by lack of road access.	Recreational fishing, hunting and trapping would continue subject to Shee Atiká permission to access its lands. The Proposed Action would increase access and more fishing, hunting, and trapping would be anticipated. However, there may be potential for fishing, hunting and trapping restrictions due to the increased pressure on fish and wildlife populations. There may be effects from habitat fragmentation (reduced wildlife presence due to presence of humans) that could impact hunting and trapping opportunities. Fishing regulations could be increased because of the road presence, which would be consistent with other Sitka road-system regulations.
Berry Picking	Opportunity available but access is limited and requires Shee Atiká's permission on Shee Atiká lands.	Continued berry picking opportunities and improved access would increase berry-picking opportunities. Shee Atiká advance permission is required to access its lands.

Recreational Activity	No Action Alternative / Existing Conditions	Proposed Action Alternative: Long-Term Effects
Scenic Viewing	Area seen from Katlian Bay by boat.	Continued viewing opportunities at Katlian Bay by boat and additional scenic viewing at road viewpoints on land.
OHV Use	Available on reserved road easements on Shee Atiká lands and on a portion of NFS Trail No. 3175797.	Continued access to reserved road easements. Increased opportunity to use these easements due to the Proposed Action and development for OHV trailer parking at the day use area. Possible unauthorized use with increased access.
Picnicking and Camping	Available at Starrigavan Campground. Backcountry camping available throughout the project area.	Continued availability at Starrigavan Campground. Also opportunities to picnic at the viewpoints and day-use area. Improved access would increase availability of backcountry camping.
Outfitters/Guides	Five outfitters and guides known to use NFS lands in the project area.	Existing outfitters and guides may no longer use the project area if a solitary experience is preferred. Other outfitters and guides could be attracted to the area due to increased access.

3.1.4 Biking

Short-term Effects: Biking may continue on existing reserved road easements but would not be allowed where construction is ongoing. There is currently minimal biking within the project area, so no short-term effects are expected.

Long-term Effects: Biking along the 9 miles of proposed road would be allowed and would provide a new recreational opportunity (Table 1). Because the road would be unpaved, biking opportunities would be limited to use of mountain bikes. Improved access as a result of the Proposed Action would likely allow more bikers to gain access further inland to areas that currently experience limited or light use. Parking would be available at the proposed day use area planned under the Proposed Action. Road No. 75797 and a portion of Road No. 7579 on Shee Atiká lands would be improved for construction activities. This would increase and improve biking access on Shee Atiká lands. Through the new and improved road, there would also be a higher level of access to existing reserved road easements (Road Nos. 7579, 75791, 75797) and NFS Trail No., 3175797 (Figure 4). It is unknown whether these roads would be maintained into the future.

3.1.5 Fishing, Hunting and Trapping

Short-term Effects: Fishing would continue in Katlian Bay. Fishing within the project area would be restricted if fishers would impact construction activities. Increased noise and activity may deter wildlife in the area, resulting in a short-term reduction in recreational hunting success within the project area.

Long-term Effects: Access to fishing within the Katlian and adjacent watersheds would be increased (Table 1). This improved access would allow more users to fish in the area, which may result in increased pressure on the resource. Fishing regulations per ADF&G may be changed due to this increase in fishing and because of the addition of the road to match existing Sitka road system streams. For example, the proposed Katlian Bay Road may be closed to coho

fishing as currently occurs with other Sitka roads near streams (J. Zutz, ADF&G, scoping letter sent to John Barnett, April 1, 2015, regarding the potential for future fishing closures).

Under the Proposed Action, access to hunting and/or trapping would also be increased, which would allow more users to gain access further inland to areas that currently experience limited or light use (Table 1). The increased hunting and trapping opportunity could result in increased impacts to game populations. Hunting regulations per ADF&G may be changed due to the construction of the road and the need to protect wildlife populations (J. Zutz, ADF&G, scoping letter sent to John Barnett, April 1, 2015, regarding potential future changes in hunting and fishing regulations). The road would also result in habitat fragmentation that may affect game use of the area.

3.1.6 Berry Picking

Short-term Effects: Construction is not expected to impact berry pickers since there is considerable land available in the project area for berry picking. However, berry pickers would be prohibited from using the road corridor during construction.

Long-term Effects: Access to berry picking would be increased by the Proposed Action, likely allowing more users to gain access further inland to new areas for berry picking (Table 1). It should be noted that there is already considerable opportunity throughout Baranof Island for berry picking.

3.1.7 Scenic Viewing

Short-term Effects: Recreational scenic viewing would continue by boat in the Katlian Bay area.

Long-term Effects: Recreational roaded access to scenic viewing would be a new opportunity within the project area (Table 1). The scenic viewing under the Proposed Action would be available via hiking, biking, and car. Scenic viewing by boat in Katlian Bay would continue and be similar to existing conditions.

3.1.8 OHV Use

Short-term Effects: During construction, Road Nos. 7579 and 75797 would be temporarily closed to OHVs while it is being used for access to build bridges associated with the Proposed Action.

Long-term Effects: The Proposed Action would provide land access to existing reserved road easements throughout the project area (Table 1), likely resulting in increased use of these roads. Parking for trailers with OHVs would be provided in the day use area associated with the Proposed Action. As a result of construction activities, NFS Road No. 7579 and Road No. 75797 (both on Shee Atiká lands) would be improved during construction activities. This would increase and improve access on Shee Atiká lands. There would also likely be a higher level of access to existing Road Nos. 75791, 75792, 75797, and the unimproved portion of Road No. 7579. These roads are currently unmaintained and may continue to be unmaintained. As a result, increased use of these reserved road easements could result in long-term road deterioration. In addition, without management controls, there may be an increase in unauthorized use of OHVs on prohibited areas (A. Lapalme (a), pers. comm., Sitka Ranger District, Recreation, Lands, Minerals, and Special Uses staff).

3.1.9 Picnicking and Camping

Short-term Effects: Existing picnicking would continue at the Starrigavan Campground during construction activities. There are no camping facilities within the road corridor of the Proposed Action. However, the Starrigavan Campground may be affected by noise, dust, and increased human presence in the area. Currently, the existing road comes within 150 feet (ft) of an existing campsite. This campsite is only occupied about 10 percent of the time according to the campground hosts' anecdotal information. (A. Lapalme (a), pers. comm., Sitka Ranger District, Recreation, Lands, Minerals, and Special Uses staff). Therefore, campsites close to the proposed construction and road may see less use. When in use, the campsite would be less attractive for use by recreationists

Long-term Effects: Access to picnicking would be increased, specifically at viewpoints and the day use area which would have new picnic tables (Table 1). Thus, more picnicking would be expected to occur under the Proposed Action. There would be no change to developed camping opportunities at the Starrigavan Campground (Table 1). Improved access to the project area due to the Proposed Action would likely result in more campers gaining access farther inland to undeveloped areas that currently experience limited, light, or no use.

3.1.10 Permitted Outfitters/Guides

Short-term Effects: Noise and the presence of construction workers could impact use by permitted outfitters and guides, who may seek other areas to use until construction activity is completed.

Long-term Effects: The Proposed Action could deter existing outfitters and guides from using the area if remote and isolated experiences are preferred by their customers (Table 1). However, new road access into the project area may prove attractive to outfitters, guides, and other commercial entities. Commercial ventures could apply for permits to use Shee Atiká lands or federal NFS lands, potentially increasing the number of organized groups using the area. This increased use could lead to a greater number of social encounters, impact the natural environment, and affect harvestable resources.

3.2 Effects under the No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, no road would be built. Recreational opportunities would remain as described under existing conditions.

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4 AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION, MITIGATION, AND AUTHORIZATIONS

The Proposed Action was developed to avoid and minimize potential recreational disturbance to the Katlian Bay estuary. In addition, while the road was being located, there was an effort to identify viewpoints that could be used by recreationists driving along the road. As previously described, mitigation measures planned to enhance the area for recreation include viewpoints along the road corridor (Figure 5) as well as development of a day use area (Figure 2). The day use area would include parking for seven vehicles, including space for OHV trailers, picnic tables, and fire pit. Interpretive signs would be included at the viewpoints as well as at the day use area.

As described above, construction activities would affect the camping experience for users of the Starrigavan Campground, particularly those campsites close to the Proposed Action. It is recommended that the campsites closest to construction are temporarily closed during this time and that campground users are alerted to the construction activity at least two months prior to construction so that these users would have an option of finding another camping location if desired.

The use of OHVs in areas where culverts and stream crossings have been removed could result in damage to fish habitat where crossings have been removed. Thus, signs and gates should be added as needed on existing reserved road easements to provide clear direction on the roads and trails open for recreational use.

To allow for use of the Proposed Action as a trail during winter months, a small asphalt paved parking area (maintained during winter months) at the beginning of the proposed road is recommended for recreational users.

It is recommended that the Forest Service prepare a recreation plan for the NFS lands in the project area to minimize user conflicts and increase opportunities for future Forest Service recreation funding (Forest Service 2015; A. Lapalme (a), pers. comm., Sitka Ranger District, Recreation, Lands, Minerals, and Special Uses staff).

Due to ADF&G concerns over the day use area being located in a riparian corridor frequently used by bears (J. Zutz, ADF&G, scoping letter sent to John Barnett, DOT&PF, April 1, 2015, regarding presence of bears in the project area), the day use area was moved. However, bear-proof trash cans and signage warning of bear activity should be placed in the day use area.

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