



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Natural Resources
OFFICE OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND PERMITTING

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May 2, 2025

Tongass National Forest, Yakutat Ranger District
Attention: Jesse Stuve
Recreation Management Specialist
712 Ocean Cape Road
Yakutat, AK 99689

Submitted via email to jesse.stuve@usda.gov

Re: Yakutat Ranger District Proposed Cannon Beach Cabin Construction Project

Dear Mr. Stuve,

The State of Alaska (State) reviewed the Tongass National Forest, Yakutat Ranger District, proposed Cannon Beach cabin construction project. This project includes replacing the existing tent platform with a larger cabin, constructing a covered deck on concrete footings, replacing the portable bathroom with a pit toilet, and rerouting/improving access infrastructure. The comments below incorporate input from the Departments of Natural Resources (DNR) and Fish and Game (ADF&G).

The State is supportive of public use cabin development in the Tongass. Cabins play an important role in enhancing public use and access to federal public lands in Alaska. Congress sought to protect such access to public lands for harvest and recreation uses with the numerous cabin provisions in the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA).

Based on our familiarity with the Cannon Beach area, the State offers the following comments and recommendations:

Hunting Access

While there is some hunting activity in the area, the proposed cabin is unlikely to significantly alter hunting access for users in the Yakutat area. The cabin's primary purpose appears to be recreational lodging rather than a hunter-focused cabin.

Potential for Increased Human-Bear Interactions:

ADF&G identifies the potential for increased human-bear interactions due to elevated site use as a primary concern associated with this project. To mitigate this risk, we recommend that the Forest Service incorporates the following design and management considerations:

- **Bear-Resistant Construction:** The cabin design should prioritize features that deter bears from accessing the porch and windows. This may include robust construction materials, secure window coverings, and elevated porch designs.

- **Secure Trash Receptacle:** ADF&G recommends the installation of a very sturdy, bear-resistant metal trash container securely bolted to a concrete pad. Relying solely on users to pack out their trash may prove ineffective, potentially leading to improper disposal in the surrounding environment or attempts to burn it in the firepit.
- **Educational Signage:** Clear and prominent signage should be installed to educate cabin users about bear safety practices, proper food storage, and waste disposal procedures.

General Support

Notwithstanding the concerns regarding potential human-bear interactions, the State is generally supportive of this project, recognizing the recreational benefits of a permanent cabin structure in this area. We believe that with careful consideration of our recommendations, the Forest Service can minimize potential negative impacts on wildlife and improve the user experience.

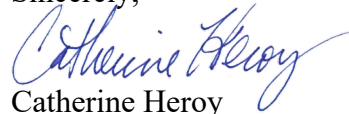
We request the following considerations when maintaining existing or constructing new cabins:

- ANILCA allows the use of motorized equipment such as chainsaws on federal lands. We suggest providing guidance for appropriate firewood harvest locations and techniques to protect resources while also supporting cabin users.

Closing

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this proposed project. Please contact me at (907)269-0880 or by email at catherine.heroy@alaska.gov to coordinate any follow up discussions.

Sincerely,



Catherine Heroy
Federal Program Manager