

## SIGNIFICANCE ANALYSIS FOR A NON-SIGNIFICANT AMENDMENT TO THE FOREST PLAN

Based on the project level analysis contained in the EA, a permanent communication site is proposed in the vicinity of Endicott Ridge on the west side of Lynn Canal to provide a telecommunication link between Juneau and Haines. This site will be added to the list of communication sites identified in the Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan), Appendix E as an amendment to the 2008 Forest Plan. As required by Forest Plan standards and guidelines for administration of special use permits for non-recreation activities (LAND2, #14), the proponent has provided technical data for site designation, including demand for the site, consideration of alternative locations, compatibility with other electronic uses, interference with other uses, areas of electronic signal coverage, signal paths, and relationship of the proposed site to other sites.

Changes to forest plans that are not significant are described in FSM 1926.51. Adding the Endicott Ridge Communication Site to the approved list of communication sites in Appendix E of the 2008 Tongass Forest Plan will not alter any goals and objectives nor adjust any management area boundaries or management prescriptions. The Endicott Ridge site will occupy an area less than 0.5 acres in size and will not conflict with existing uses or Land Use Designations. Designation of this communication site to improve the services and reliability of communication systems between communities in southeast Alaska is consistent with the Goals of the Forest Plan.

Designation of the Endicott Ridge site as a communication site will have no measurable effect on outputs identified in the Forest Plan. This site is located within an area that is not commercial forestland; and the amount of vegetation disturbance will not affect wildlife populations or subsistence hunting or gathering opportunities.

**Conclusion** – Based on a consideration of the factors above, I conclude this is not a significant amendment to the Tongass Forest Plan. This amendment is fully consistent with current Forest Plan goals and objectives. The amendment provides a facility to serve the demonstrated needs of the local communities. This analysis, in combination with the Endicott Ridge Electronic Site Environmental Assessment, document my decision to amend the Forest Plan with a non-significant amendment by designating Endicott Ridge as a permanent communication site.

### FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

I have reviewed the EA for this project using criteria identified in implementing regulations for the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR 1508.27). Based on the EA and the elements of significance described below, I have determined that this is not a major action that will have a significant effect on the human environment and therefore does not require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement.

1. Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse. A significant effect may exist even if the Federal agency believes that on balance the effect will be beneficial.