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First name: Lisa
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Comments: There are multiple factors to consider when examining potential cabin sites. Our family often rents cabins multiple times per year but as access to favorite cabins books early and is often tidal dependent or weather affected we don't make use of cabins as consistently as we would like. It makes sense to add cabins on the road system to make visiting easier for families or visitors who don't own a boat and to take tidal access out of the equation. Unfortunately, the concerns over potential vandalism increase when a cabin is too accessible via the road system and part of the attraction of a cabin (for our family) is tied in with the feeling of being immersed in a remote area.

Access to fishing and hunting grounds continue to be a priority for our family USFS cabin visits. However, we have noticed that many visitors in the log books, especially non-residents, have a different primary focus for their stay. The scenery is always a part of our enjoyment of a site as well. We like cabins with lofts to include multiple generations or couples. We like the A-frame cabins. One of our favorites is the KaSheets Lake cabin. It takes advantage of its sunny location and brings in natural light with its use of bump outs and windows.

Our longtime favorite cabins in the Petersburg Duncan Salt Chuck area hold decades of fond memories fishing, hunting, and exploring with family and many friends. Visits in the past were always harvesting connected and now we are as likely to berry pick or simply explore. In the last few years, we enjoyed renting road accessible cabins in Juneau, including two in Point Bridget State Park and the John Muir Cabin. All three of these are highly sought reservations and eagerly booked by locals and non-residents. The sister cabins of Cowee Meadow cabin and Blue Mussel cabin allow for two sets (related or not) to cabin camp in the same area. The hike-in is relatively flat and easy for young children to elders yet long enough that trail users are cabin-users or day trippers hiking the scenic walk. The trail winds through forest and meadow systems so there is changing scenery along the way finally opening to the beach. The wildflower meadows and views make the hike and the route to the cabin part of the appeal. (We did have one oppressively buggy visit and for that reason we prefer the ocean situation of Blue Mussel to the meadow adjacent Cowee Meadow cabin despite the additional walk.) The John Muir cabin is at a higher elevation and has a picturesque forested trail with excellent sunny ocean views.

After several years of change, we are excited to book and use the new Raven's Roost cabin. We rented the old cabin every few years, but it was a bit far for packing gear and small children and restrictive for anyone with knee issues. I will miss that south facing view and hope it will still be possible to hike along the ridge that way. While I have not done the newly altered hike yet myself, family and friends say the conditions for packing in gear have improved and we look forward to the views and wildflowers along the route.

With these elements in mind I offer the following site suggestion:
-car accessible trail head
-scenic trail with interest: ie. mixed vegetation or viewpoints
-moderate trail (ie. grade/steps OR distance for carrying a backpack with gear (each able person typically news food/sleeping gear) and bringing/carrying small children.
-cabin site feels like a destination

Ideal Cove Cabin
Located on a short spur from Ideal cove and accessible by road and trail via the Three Lakes system or by boat from Frederick Sound. This cabin provides views of southern Fredrick and the Coastal Mountain range. The ocean-front site is ideal for folks wanting to explore the coast line near Ideal Cove and is a landing point across from the entrance to LeConte Glacier for excursions into that area. Humpback whales and other wildlife are seen

in this location regularly.
Adventures- boating (fresh/salt), fishing, hiking, beach exploring, easy glacier access, wildlife viewing.

Sand Lake Cabin
Located on Sand Lake and accessible by road and trail via the Three Lakes system or boat and trail via an Ideal Cove entry. This south facing cabin provides lake views and is a hub for overnight excursions exploring the Three Lakes trail system including Ideal Cove for saltwater access.
Adventures- boating (fresh), fishing, hiking, beach access via trail

Note: Having two cabins accessible via the Three Lakes system means connected parties could rent both cabins and meet up for day excursions (as our family has done with Kasheets Bay and Lake Cabins) OR separate parties can rent each and are far enough away to possibly never overlap. I would recommend either of these two cabins be on spurs off the "main" system so daytrip folks with established adventure routes would feel they are getting something new vs having a site removed or substantially altered.

Woodpecker Cabin Option A
Located on a forested southwest-facing slope with access via woodpecker cove road and trail. This cabin site perches on the hillside with excellent views of Sumner Strait facing Zarembo Island.
Adventures- forest and alpine hiking, scenic ocean views

Note: The cabin site and access trail would need to consider parking accessibility and seasonal snow. A cabin at a lower forested elevation with a lower elevation trailhead would extend the season but the trail distance would be longer from the road and the views from elevation less dramatic. Alpine access via spur trail from the cabin would increase the usability. A woodpecker connected logging road winds into the alpine near small lakes (off Riva Ridge Road) and discontinued 40004 road could possibly be incorporated into an access or spur trail. Multiple swaths in this section have been logged but the second growth provides variety in vegetation on the trail and possibly a more open view depending on the site. The option of alpine access, old road connections and an excellent cabin view makes this idea appealing.

OR

Woodpecker Cabin Option B
Located on a forested south-facing slope with access via woodpecker cove road and trail. This cabin site perches on the hillside with excellent views of Sumner Strait facing Zarembo & Woronkofski Islands.
Adventures- forest, scenic ocean views

Notes: Option B is a lower elevation viewing cabin than option A, with closer access to the main highway. Closed road 40083 could be incorporated into an access trail off Woodpecker Road that switchbacks around the hill to the cabin site. The forested hike and the view is the primary appeal of this site and it would be important to consider that in the cabin design. Another spur trail could provide several additional higher viewpoints or alternately head down the hillside to beach access allowing for a boat access option.

Woodpecker Notes: In exploring woodpecker road options I considered the example of the John Muir Cabin in Juneau. Either site would give a user access to fantastic sunny ocean views on the southside of Mitkof Island. Woodpecker Cove itself is a highly attractive site already often used (and sometimes misused) by car campers. Either proposed site option would require a new hiking trail from Woodpecker Road. A moderate elevation wooded cabin site with views would allow for easier hiking-in access with gear and additional spur trail links could connect the cabin to the alpine or further forested viewpoints. The woodpecker area of the island seems relatively underused in comparison to the other out-the-road options yet the views and sunsets are spectacular. It would be interesting to hear from hunters who might use this area in the fall to make sure potential use overlaps would be positive or cause concern.