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Comments: On behalf of The Boat Company, I request that you downscale this project or prepare an EIS. The proposed sale volume is large, and the preferred alternative and previously scoped alternative would clearcut between 500 and 800 acres through clearcuts of up to 30 acres and 100 acres in size, respectively. The decision to analyze this timber sale through an Environmental Assessment seems unusual.

The Boat Company also notes that the EA failed to provide any discussion of impacts to recreational uses. The project document file includes three resource reports, each of which is one page long and provides no or little information other than a conclusory assertion that there will be no impacts. Not only is the area in close proximity to one of the region's most popular trails, it is also a popular bay for recreational activities, adjacent to a major small cruise travel route and the project area appears to be highly suitable for recreational activities. Our experience on Kuiu Island is that once the clearcutting stops and the recovering forests "green up" bays with protected anchorages along our cruise routes can become major recreation destinations. It seems unwise, and an irretrievable commitment of resources, to log this area through clearcuts of a size that would require a major industrial logging operation. Why not offer smaller microsales, and perhaps local timber operators could carve out wildlife corridors and open areas for hiking instead?

We may expand our cruise routes to this area at some point in the future, but if log barges and large timber sale companies are operating, it simply will not be suitable for clientele who expect to see a wild Alaska and forested landscapes. The plan to implement this project and future clearcutting in the project area could render it unsuitable recreational habitat for decades.

The Boat Company