

## **CITY OF CRAIG MEMORANDUM**

To: Mayor and Craig City Council  
From: City Administrator Brian Templin  
Date: October 17, 2023  
RE: Ketchikan and Wrangell Landless Selection on POW Comments -

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The city has been tracking and has commented throughout the process on land selections on Prince of Wales Island for landless groups in Southeast Alaska. The original legislation and maps showed about 20,000 acres of selections on Prince of Wales between several of the landless groups. Partly based on comments from the city and negotiations with the landless groups the selections on Prince of Wales were reduced. In 2021 updated legislation and maps were released reducing the amount of selections on POW to about 6,000 acres. This consists of two parcels just west of Coffman Cove (627 acres) and three parcels just south of Cholmondeley Sound (Kitkun Cove) totaling 5,191 acres. Based on previous land selections on Prince of Wales, the fact that the landless groups requesting the Prince of Wales parcels were not on Prince of Wales, effects to rural subsistence areas that would be lost as a result of these selections, and other reasons the city opposed any land selections on the island. At the November 18, 2021 council meeting the council approved a letter reiterating our position.

With the passing of Congressman Don Young the bill stalled since there was no other sponsor in the house. Now that Congresswoman Peltola has taken office the house version of the bill is moving and the senate version is being held for hearings again. There is a hearing in the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee scheduled for the end of October.

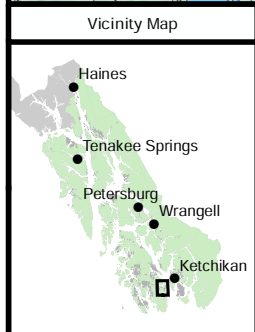
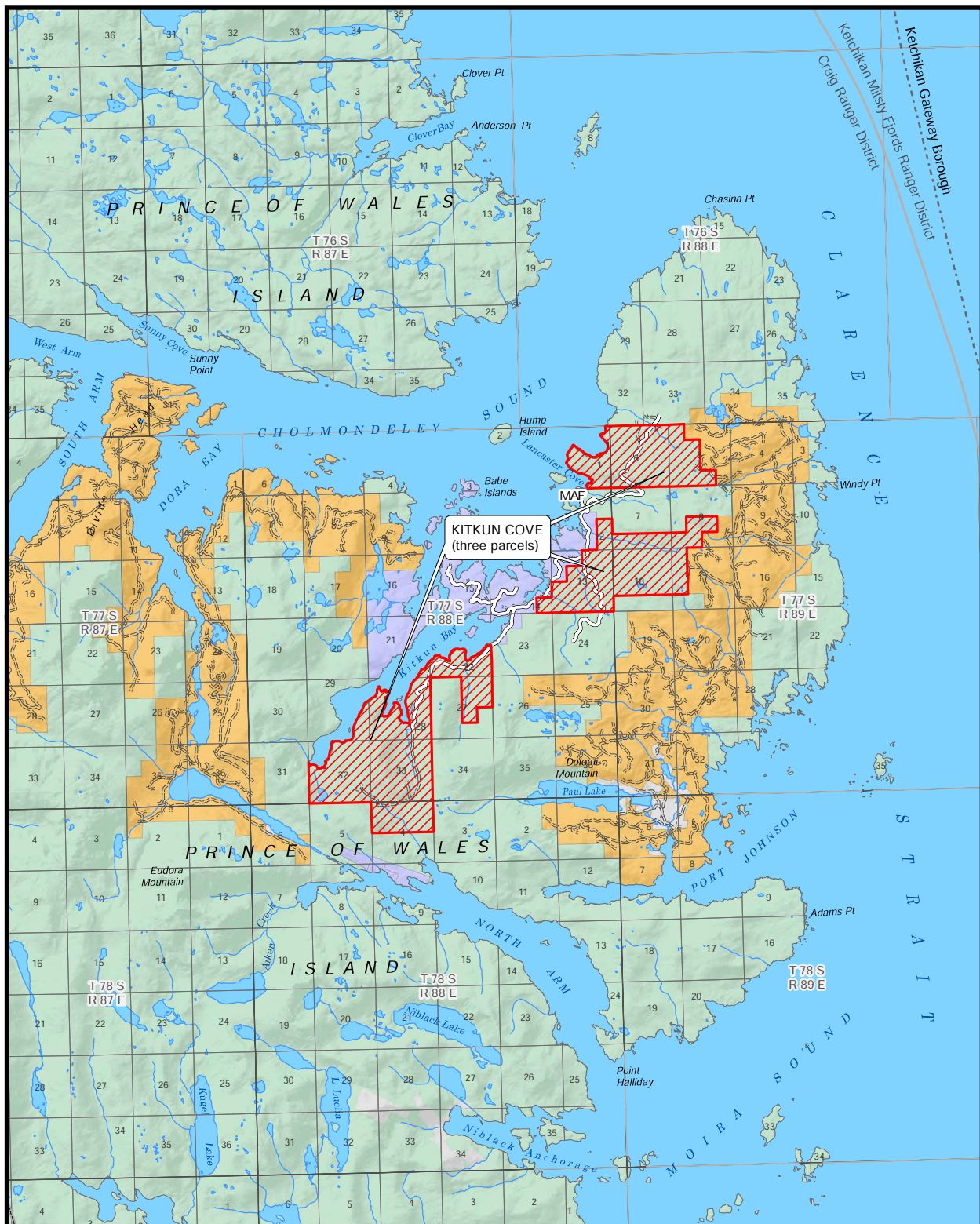
A draft letter is attached that substantially reiterates the city's position sent to Senator Murkowski in 2021.

The council should discuss the issue and direct staff regarding submission of comments to the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. If approved, staff will use substantially the same comments for other committee hearings and will send copies to the comments to all three delegates.

**Recommended Motion:**

Move to direct staff to submit council comments on the landless group land selection.





#### Disclaimer

This does not indicate USDA support of this proposal. This represents USDA technical assistance only. These documents remain congressional records in their entirety, even after the completion of the proposed bills, and are not USDA records under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) or any other law. If USDA receives any request or demand for access to these records under the FOIA or any other authority, USDA will immediately notify the congressional office and will respond to the request or demand based upon the understanding that these are congressional, not USDA, records. The USDA Forest Service makes no warranty, expressed or implied regarding the data displayed on this map, and reserves the right to correct, update, modify, or replace information.

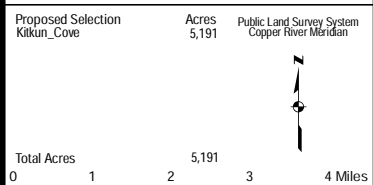
References: Alaska Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Forest Service - Enterprise Data Warehouse and Tongass National Forest

- Proposed Selections
- U.S. Forest Service
- Native Corporation
- State of Alaska
- Other
- Tongass N.F. Proclaimed Boundary
- Ranger District Boundary
- Federally Designated Wilderness
- City & Borough Boundary
- MAF Marine Access Facility
- Highway
- Other Road

- U.S. Forest Service Camping Area/Site
- Campground
- Picnic Site
- Interpretive Site
- Rental Cabin
- Shelter
- Wildlife Viewing Site
- Open Road
- Off-Highway Vehicle Trail
- Hiking Trail

#### Unrecognized Southeast Alaska Native Communities Recognition and Compensation Act

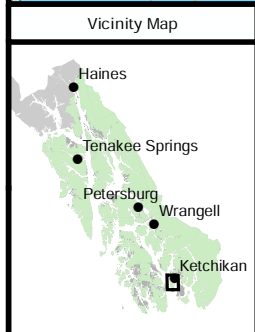
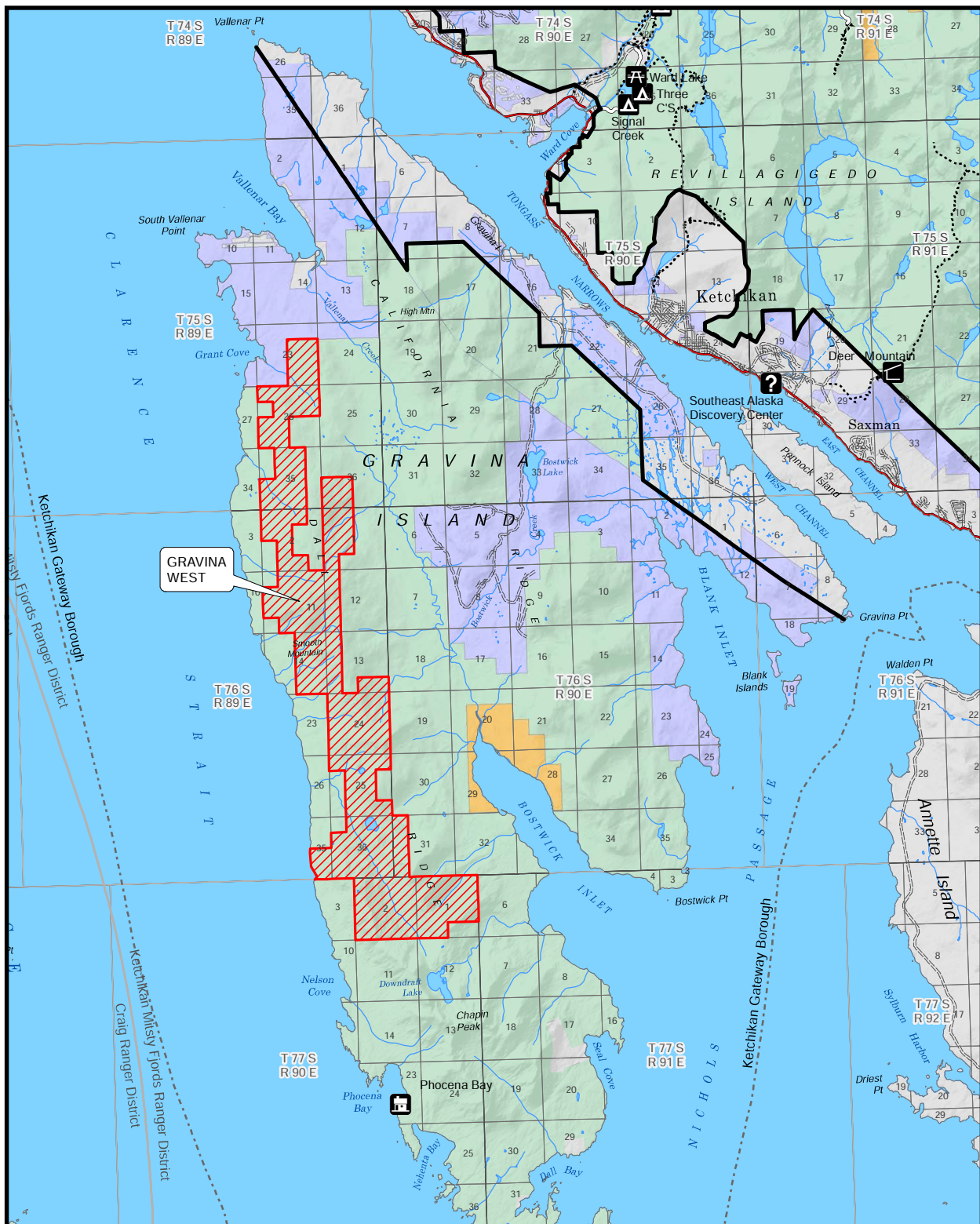
Urban Corporation for Ketchikan, Ketchikan Selections Map 1 of 4 Preliminary Map, Version 2.0, 18-11-2021



U.S. Forest Service - Alaska Region  
Tongass National Forest  
Alaska At-Large, U.S. Congressional District

Map prepared at the request of Senator Lisa Murkowski

Data used in creation of this map are on file with U.S. Forest Service Alaska Regional Office, Juneau Alaska, T:\SF\SNP\SIR\Programs\400L and ownership\GIS 20211118\_PreliminaryMap\_UnrecognizedSEAlNativeCommunitiesRecognitionandCompensationAct.mxd



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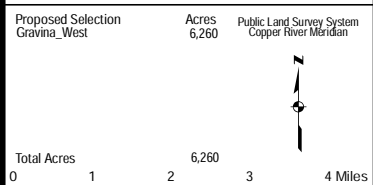
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#### Unrecognized Southeast Alaska Native Communities Recognition and Compensation Act

Urban Corporation for Ketchikan, Ketchikan Selections Map 2 of 4 Preliminary Map, Version 2.0, 18-11-2021



U.S. Forest Service - Alaska Region  
Tongass National Forest  
Alaska At-Large, U.S. Congressional District

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October 17, 2023

Senator Lisa Murkowski  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Murkowski:

The City of Craig would like to submit comments regarding S. 1889 which is scheduled for a hearing in the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. The city has commented throughout the development of this bill and its previous versions. These comments are specifically directed toward selections near Kitkun Cove and Lake Bay Creek, both located on Prince of Wales Island and shown on the map dated 10/18/2021.

While the city does not object to selection of lands regarding recognition of the landless groups, the City of Craig does continue to strongly oppose land selections on Prince of Wales Island by the Ketchikan and Wrangel landless groups

The City of Craig is thankful for your consideration and the removal of some of the land selections on Prince of Wales shown in an earlier version of the maps and legislation, but renews its objection to land selections on Prince of Wales Island. Specifically, the city objects due to the following reasons:

1. The City of Craig objects to proposed Prince of Wales land selections. The city finds it difficult to believe that suitable selections of land are not available to the proposed Ketchikan and Wrangell corporations at locations closer to those communities. A review of national forest land patterns shows hundreds of thousands of acres of national forest land in and near the proposed corporation home communities. Given that ANCSA land selections are meant to benefit community shareholders, the land selections are most properly made close to the community where the corporation is based.
2. When land is selected or exchanged out of the national forest system to a recipient such as an ANCSA corporation, the subject land loses its status under Title VIII of ANILCA. That change reduces the amount of land on POW managed for rural subsistence uses, and potentially also loss of the use of public roads, landings, and other features now available to subsistence users. While the city is aware that the legislation provides for continued noncommercial uses of the selected lands in Unit 2, the bill explicitly permits the denial of access to selected lands at the will of the recipient corporation subject to broadly worded justification.

3. Prior conveyances away from the national forest have not included easements sufficient to assure continued access to longstanding recreation and subsistence sites, including access to rivers, lakes, campsites, trails, and other areas used by the public.
4. Unit 2 has been the focus of several new and large land selections over the past several years, most notably selections made by Sealaska and the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority. These selections have made federal land management decisions on the island difficult due to the changing ownership patterns on the forest. The volume of additional land selections in the POW area resulting from S 1889 concerns the city.

The City of Craig asks that you remove Prince of Wales Island (Kitkun Cove and Lake Bay Creek) selections from this draft map and legislation.

Thank you for considering the city's comments.

Sincerely,

Mayor Kasey Smith  
City of Craig