

Closing of Public Cabins Put on Temporary Hold

The Chief of the Forest Service (FS) has directed that the planned closing of selected cabins on the Tongass and selected recreation sites throughout the country be reviewed before any action is taken. Of special concern to the Forest Service seems to be the negative reaction of the public. The review team will look at the level of public involvement and try and strengthen that aspect of their process.

The FS is facing millions of dollars in back maintenance on recreation facilities nation wide. On the Tongass remote public use cabins are especially expensive to maintain and receive limited use.

Friends of Admiralty Island are concerned that the Forest Service proposal includes removing two Admiralty cabins and unless some form of partnership is formed with commercial or volunteer groups to help pay for maintenance the remaining 12 cabins and shelters may be closed. Some of these cabins date back to the Civilian Conservation Corps days and are of historic importance as well as incredible valuable for safety, recreation and hunting.

We have been in conversation with the Forest Service and urged them to shift priorities from subsidizing timber sales to supporting recreation, which results in more income to their funds. As simple a solution as that sounds we realize it is not likely to happen.

We feel that to loose these cabins will be a great loss to the Admiralty experience, including the cross Admiralty canoe trail. We are exploring with the FS how we might, as an organization, help maintain at least one cabin and some sections of Admiralty trails.

