Executive Summary

Country

Argentina

State, Province or Region

Province of Chubut

Name of Property

Los Alerces National Park

Geographical coordinates to the Nearest Second

Latitude: 42o 34' 43.65" - 43o 09' 52.78" S Longitude: 72o 09' 29.55" - 71o 34' 40.28" W

Central coordinate: 42o 51' 10.08" S, 71o 52' 22.08" W

Textual description of the boundary(ies) of the nominated property

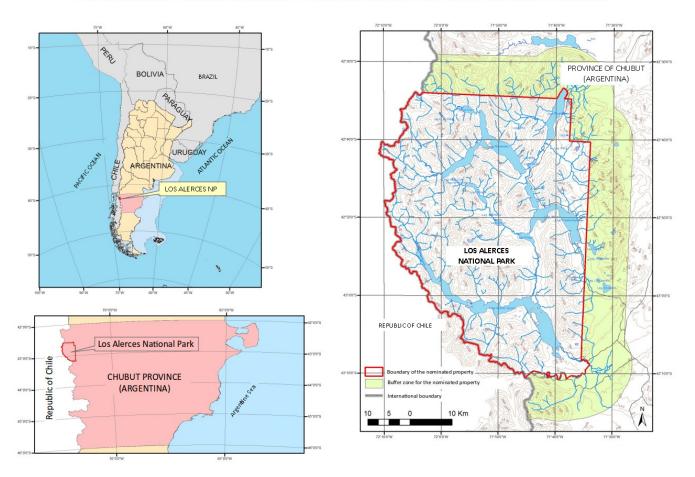
The nominated property comprises the totality of Los Alerces National Park (PNLA, Parque Nacional Los Alerces). Located in the Futaleufú Department, in the mountain- ous region of northwestern Chubut Province, the Park has an extension of 259,822 ha. It was created as a National Reserve by Decree No. 105,433 in 1937; its boundaries and conservation categories were definitively established by Law No. 19,292 in 1971.

Within PNLA, the National Park per se occupies an area of 188,379 ha, (Cagetory II, IUCN). This area, which includes land and lakes, is completely free of human habitation and of fragmentation caused by roads. It includes 71,443 ha of National Reserve (Category VI) inhabited by rural settlers and management and control personnel, as well as the main visitor services and facilities for the protected area. It possesses important conservation values in its own right, and serves as an inner buffer zone for the protected area, providing further protection for the integrity of the stricter conservation areas.

To the west, the boundary of the nominated property runs along the international border with the Republic of Chile, from the border's intersection with the Futaleufú or Grande River (PNLA's southern boundary) northward until reaching Cerro Bonete. From this point, the boundary runs west-east along cadastral lines until reaching the shore of Lake Rivadavia; then runs along the lake's northern shore; then along cadastral lines until reaching approximately longitude 71o 37' W. The eastern boundary follows cadastral lines running north-south between 71o 37' W and 71o 34' W, until reaching the confluence of the Futaleufú and Corintos rivers.

For the purposes of this nomination, the buffer zones in the nominated property's surroundings are defined as the adjacent areas located in the Andean-North Patagonian Biosphere Reserve (ANPBR) — established by UNESCO in 2007 — with other comple- mentary areas that cover a 10-km wide strip around PNLA in Argentine territory. The surface of the external buffer zone is approximately 135,870 ha. Within ANPBR, in adjacent sectors of the buffer zone to the north and south of PNLA, there are lands reserved for conservation by the Province of Chubut. Acting as a corridor, these lands also help to protect and strengthen the conservation of the nominated property.

LOCATION MAP: BOUNDARIES OF THE NOMINATED PROPERTY AND BUFFER ZONE



Brief Synthesis

he nominated property comprises the totality of Los Alerces National Park and Na-tional Reserve (PNLA, Parque Nacional Los Alerces)1. Created in 1937, PNLA pro-tects the millennial forests of alerce — Fitzroya cupressoides — an endangered species of outstanding universal value, being the second longestliving species on Earth, with a lifespan of more than 3,600 years. The Park protects 36% of Argentina's alerce forests, including the forest masses with the greatest genetic variability on the eastern slopes of the Andes. These forests contain exclusive genetic variants and the oldest individuals in the country. They are Argentina's largest alerce forests granted the fullest protection of national law, and the second-largest alerce forests in Chile and Argentina. These forests are part of the Park's 10,298 ha of Valdivian forest. Their most characteristic species include the tepa or huahuán (Laureliopsis phillippiana), tineo (Weinmannia tri- chosperma), Guaitecas cypress (Pilgerodendron uviferum), and species such as Eucryphia cordifolia, Aextoxicon punctatum, Drimys winteri and Guevina avellana (Orellana, 2013).

PNLA, located in the Andes of Chubut Province (42o 51' 10.08" S, 71o 52' 22.08" W) is in the ecoregion called the Valdivian Temperate Forests, one of the world's 200 con-servation hotspots (Olson and Dinerstein, 1997). The Park's biological importance resides in the presence of forest masses with an important degree of ecological integrity, ample variety of habitats, and unique fauna assemblages with species typical of the ecoregion. Especially relevant at the ecoregional level is the presence of numerous fam-ily and genus endemisms (34% of woody plant genera are

endemic; of these, 80% are monotypic), some of them relictual. PNLA contains the most southerly populations of alerce and other species of flora, such as the Cordilleran cypress (Austrocedrus chilen- sis), coihue (Nothofagus dombeyi), colihue bamboo (Chusquea culeou) and Chilean myrtle (Luma apiculata).

The history of the Park's management for more than 75 years, combined with the natural disposition of its mountain ranges and numerous bodies of water, have made it possible to maintain large sectors of the main forest communities strongly isolated from spontaneous usage and the threats resulting from anthropic activities such as cattle rais- ing and fires. This situation favours a high environmental integrity in the conservation unit, as well as the preservation of landscapes of exceptional scenic quality.

The nominated property's territorial extension allows it to sustain viable populations of its main species assemblages, and to maintain adequate functional connectivity and continuity of the relevant processes at landscape scale. The protected area includes a complete environmental gradient, from the glaciers and quarries in the high mountain — which give birth to water courses — to the communities of northern Patagonian temperate forest formations. This is a contributing factor to the resilience of these environ- ments against the effects promoted by climate change. Likewise, the general integrity of the nominated property's surrounding areas — made possible in part due to ongoing improvements in joint management — helps to fortify the aforementioned conditions, and hence the viability of long-term conservation.

¹Hereinafter, unless otherwise stated, the expressions "Los Alerces National Park" or PNLA include the National Park as well as the contiguous National Reserve.



Proposed Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

Protected Valdivian temperate forest environments of high integrity and biological singularity

The basis for the nominated property's outstanding universal value is the fact that PNLA is essential for the conservation of the forest ecosystems in the most southern and eastern portions of the Valdivian Temperate Forests, an outstanding and priority ecoregion for conservation worldwide (Olson and Dinerstein, 1997). The Park is thus a unique asset that is still not included amongst the World Heritage sites.

Important speciation processes have taken place in this ecoregion, which has de-veloped in strong biogeographic insularity as evidenced by the presence of numerous endemisms, relictual taxons and taxonomic singularities. The ecoregion's biological importance resides mainly in the presence of continuous forest

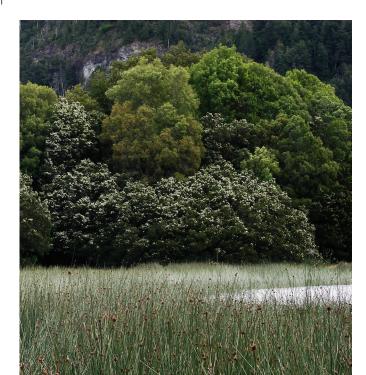
masses with a high degree of ecological integrity and a great variety of habitats. These contain the most southerly populations of several species of flora — among which the alerce tree is specially remarkable — and, southward, other species such as Cordilleran cypress, coihue, Chilean myrtle and colihue bamboo. At landscape scale, the nominated property includes an ample block of intact for- est comprising 190,121 ha (72.3% of its area) free of roads or human occupation, thus sustaining the high environmental integrity of the conservation unit. Historically, the region has had a very low incidence of disturbances derived from anthropic activities (cattle raising and fires), which in turn makes it less vulnerable to the invasion of wild herbivores introduced in the area.

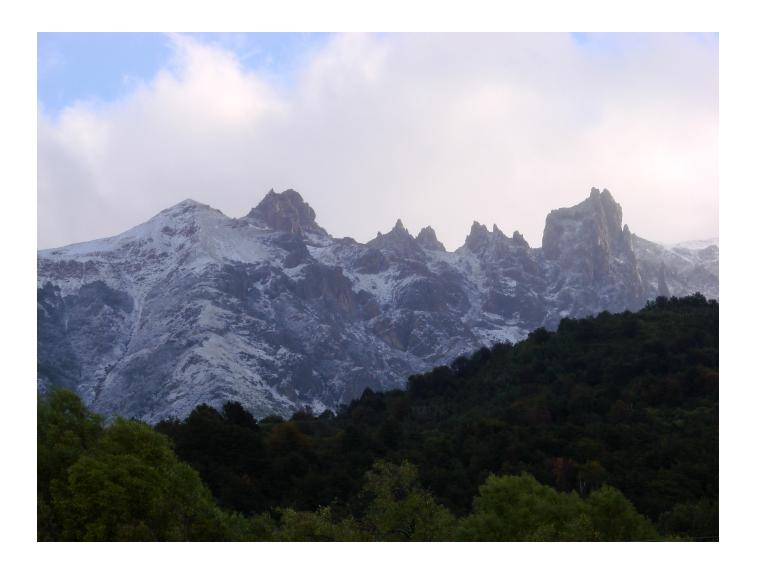
Conservation of wide-ranging millennial alerce forests, the second longest-living species on Earth

The alerce (Fitzroya cupressoides), of monotypic genus, is the largest species in the Valdivian temperate forest. It can grow up to five metres in diameter and 50 metres tall (Veblen et al., 1976; Lara, 1991; Lara and Villalba, 1993). The alerce is the foundational element of the nominated property's outstanding universal value, by virtue of being the second longest-living species on Earth (after the bristlecone pine, Pinus longaeva). Some alerce specimens have been dated at more than 3,600 years old (Premoli et al., 2000). Los Alerces National Park has the largest continuous and uninterrupted regions of this species in Argentina (7,407 ha, 36% of the species' total surface), in an excellent state of conservation. Specimens in these regions include some of the largest (in

diameter and height) and oldest (more than 2,600 years old) east of the Andes

The disposition of the area's mountain ranges and bodies of water has made it pos- sible for these relevant alerce populations — as well as a great proportion of the forest communities of the National Park's western sector — to remain non-fragmented, and isolated from anthropic effects. Likewise, the nominated property, the numerous pro- tected provincial areas in ANPBR in Argentina, and the natural protected areas at the same latitude in Chile provide connectivity and integrity for the alerce forests, as well as for species that require large areas as habitats.





Protection of significant cores of old-growth forests in northern Patagonia, which possess high genetic singularity

The alerce forests in the nominated property comprise a significant portion of old-growth forests conserved by the protected areas in northern Patagonia, which are mostly mature slope forests. Being glacial refugia, these populations exhibit the highest genetic singularity in their longitudinal and latitudinal distribution, and are thus a key reservoir for the conservation of the species (Premoli et al., 2000 a and b).

Old-growth forests themselves are recognized worldwide as a high conservation value, and of late have have been gathering increasing attention (Lindenmayer, Lau- rance at., 2012; Lindenmayer, Laurance et al., 2014; Mackey, Della Sala el al., 2015). These formations, and the nominated property in particular, are of outstanding value since

they constitute ecosystems that have developed in extraordinarily stable and per- sistent conditions for a very long time. They are true witnesses of pristine continuity through millennia, and have allowed for the development of specially intricate and outstanding ecological processes and interactions.

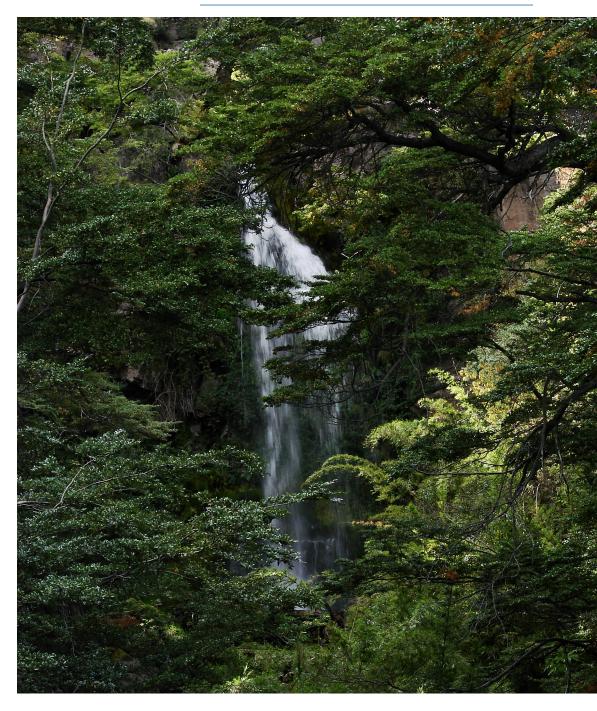
These features make Los Alerces National Park a key component for the long-term viability of the natural features that conform the biodiversity structure, functioning and self-regeneration of the forest ecosystems in the Valdivian ecoregion. It is also an appropriate area for the movement of different species in response to the potential effects of global climate change, providing continuity of natural processes across evolutive times.

PNLA plays an important role for the conservation of a wide variety of fauna, including species of special value and endemic to the ecoregion

Fauna at the nominated property consists of 23 species of mammals, including the huemul, the only endangered species of South American native deer (IUCN, 2007). The huemul's population inside PNLA is key for the conservation of the species. The Park has records of huemul deer in alerce forests, an extremely rare situation. Other relevant mammals are the pudú, the smallest deer in South America; the guigna cat; and a nocturnal marsupial, the monito del monte — a monotypic species endemic to Patagonia and considered a living fossil since it belongs to one of the oldest lineages of marsupials.

In the Park live five species of native fish; three species of reptiles, including the Val- vidian snake; and 15 species of amphibians. Amphibian species include three species exclusive to Patagonia: the gracile frog, the short-brow frog and the Emerald forest frog. Specially remarkable is Batrachyla fitzroya, a frog strictly endemic to the island of Isla Grande in Menéndez lake, whose full life cycle takes place on the island. The area also has records of 133 native bird species, including four endemic to the Valdivian rainforest and threatened species such as the Andean condor, the Chilean flamingo and the bronze-winged duck.





PNLA plays an essential role in protecting high water basins, glaciers, and a vast sweetwater reservoir

The nominated property contains an important sweet-water reservoir. The reser- voir's protection status and management helps to protect the quantity and quality of water, as well as the sustainment of natural hydric processes in an ample portion of the headwaters of the great binational Futaleufú-Yelcho basin, the main collector on the Pa- cific slope. This basin, molded by the action of successive glaciations — which created varied geomorphological features such as moraines, glaciofluvial and glaciolacustrine deposits, glacial cirques, sheepback rocks, U-shaped valleys and glacial striations — en- compasses a complex system of rivers and chained lakes, which regulates the drainage

from the abundant snow and rain precipitation.

Likewise, the property contains an important portion of Patagonia's least-impacted wetlands, by virtue of their isolation from anthropic activities (cattle raising, farming, etc.). It also contains some of the few water environments free from the seeding and invasion of salmonidae in Patagonia. The Park belongs to the National System of Pro- tected Areas, managed by the National Parks Administration; its protected status sup- ports the continuity of actions taken for the long-term preservation of biological composition and ecological functions, ensuring the viability of the area's species, populations and ecosystems.



PNLA includes and protects remote areas of extraordinary beauty and natural value

The nominated property is a unique site, combining special elements and condi- tions of the Valdivian temperate forests in northern Patagonia that create a setting of extraordinary beauty: majestic forests, an extensive system of interconnected lakes and mountain corridors with glaciers and perpetual snow — an exceptional natural value amidst a landscape of outstanding beauty, remarkable in all the world.

Scientifically, these environments are also highly relevant: they contain habitats crit- ical for biodiversity, large environmental gradients including forests that range from subhumid to superhumid and the high Andes, ample genetic diversity in plant species, protected high basins, glacial and periglacial environments, and extremely valuable dendrochronological (treering) series, with implicit information about the history of climate and disturbances — all in landscapes of exceptional beauty.

Los Alerces National Park, whose innermost reaches are accessible only by sailing huge lakes or walking narrow footpaths in a remote part of the Andes, is an invaluable asset that deserves to be included amongst the sites distinguished as World Heritage.

Criteria Under which Inscription is Proposed

<u>Criterion (vii): Contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance.</u>

PNLA conserves a variety of landscapes and scenery that enable visitors to live unique experiences. This setting has the power to connect human beings with their own origins and transcendence, bringing us nearer to the pulse of Nature.

The Park contains an extensive system of interconnected, clearwater lakes and rivers. These waters display the most extraordinary shifting hues of green, blue and turquoise; they are surrounded by lush temperate Valdivian forests in an environment of mountain ranges, glaciers and eternal snow. Alerce forests complete a unique, majestic land- scape, and confer upon it an outstanding natural aesthetic among the Andean-Patagonian forests. In particular, the northern arm of Lake Menéndez contains the Millennial Alerce Forest — the heart and emblem of the Park, located amidst a rainforest environ- ment of ferns, moss, lichens, vines and bamboo. One outstanding alerce in this forest is nearly 60 metres tall and approximately 2,600 years old — even today an imposing and silent witness of Earth's natural history and the passage of more than 100 human generations.

Since ancient times, the huiliche mapuche — the original inhabitants of the alerce's distribution area — called these trees lagual or lahuán, which translates as "life after life," meaning "long-living." For them, the alerce was a giant among the rest of the vegetation. This very slow-growing tree hails from another dimension of time and natural processes. It is living proof of the importance of upholding conservation across generations, to perpetuate diversity and the cycles of life.

Amidst these magnificent natural landscapes, the Park offers its visitors an extraordi- nary range of memorable experiences, allowing them to traverse rocky paths in a quiet walk in the forest, or to contemplate the surrounding immensity on the lake shores. Throughout the year, from any point within the Park it is possible to see the snow- capped peaks of the Andes Cordillera. Across the seasons, their aspect is modified by the changing colours of the lenga beech forests. These, in turn, contrast with the hues of the dense forest of many other species, highlighting a landscape where crystal-clear rivers, lakes and streams complete the composition.

The Arrayanes River and Verde Lake are two of the region's most picturesque fluvio- lacustrine landscapes. The green hues of the Arrayanes, recognized as an emblematic site worldwide, run over a riverbed six kilometres long and 50 metres wide. On its shores grows a copious vegetation of coihues and cypresses, among which stand out the cinnamon-coloured trunks of the Chilean myrtles. The symmetric Lake Verde reflects spectacular colours, shifting between emerald and turquoise according to the intensity of sunlight and the time of the year. The water running in the stream and the singing of the birds, surrounded by imposing mountains capped by eternal snow and ice, are capable of moving the senses, and are the manifestation of a majestic Nature.

These sensations become even more profound when one begins the ascent to Tor- recillas glacier and recognizes the U-shaped valley, a mark on the landscape left over the course of millions of years by the passage of this glacier — a giant of olden times now in pronounced retreat.



Criterion (x): Contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in- situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of Outstanding Universal Value from the point of view of science or con- servation.

PNLA is an area of great value for the conservation of biological diversity in the Valdivian Temperate Forest, an outstanding and priority ecoregion for conservation worldwide (Olson, Dinerstein et al., 1995; Armesto, León-Lobos et al., 1997; Olson and Dinerstein, 1997), by reason of being considered one of the 200 hotspots for world con- servation (WWF, 1997).

Unlike other ecoregions which are characterized by greater species diversity, the Val- divian ecoregion has developed in marked biogeographic insularity, which has allowed for important speciation processes to take place (Armesto, León-Lobos et al., 1997). This is evidenced by the presence of relictual genera and even orders, as well as numerous endemisms (Olson, Dinerstein et al., 1997), and threatened species (IUCN, 1995).

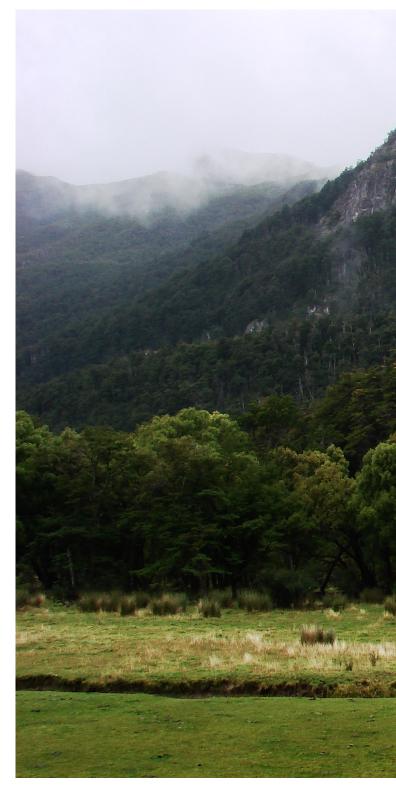
The ecoregion's biological relevance resides mainly in the presence of great contin- uous forest masses with an important degree of ecological integrity, great variety of habitats and unique species assemblages. Specially relevant is the presence of numer- ous family and genus endemisms (34% of woody plant genera are endemic; of these, 80% are monotypic), some of them relictual (Olson, Dinerstein et al., 1995; León-Lobos et al., 1997).

PNLA has at least 544 recorded species of vascular plants (Ezcurra and Puntieri, 2013) and numerous species of fungi (APN, 1997; Monjeau, 2006). Remarkable among them we find: Escallonia rosea and Deschampsia laxa, two species which in Argentina have only been found in the area surrounding Lake Menéndez; Griselinia ruscifolia, very rare in Argentina's northern Patagonian Andes region; Silene patagonica, a strict endemism of Chubut Province's mountain region, which has been recorded in the Park; Senecio yegua, discovered in the Lake Chico area — one of only two records in the country — and the Guaitecas cypress, (Pilgerodendron uviferum), the only species of the Pilgerodendron genus and the most Southern conifer in the world, of which new populations are still being discovered in little-explored sectors of the protected area (Rovere, 2002). It is important to point out that PNLA's populations of Pilgerodendron are relictual, since they have not been affected by the glacial peak and exhibit the highest genetic variabil- ity in Argentina (Premoli, Souto et al., 2002).

PNLA contains approximately 7,407 ha of millennial virgin alerce forests, as well as the most southerly populations for this species (Kitzberger, Pérez et al., 2000) and of others such as the Cordilleran cypress (Austrocedrus chilensis), coihue (Nothofagus dombeyi), colihue bamboo (Chusquea culeou) and Chilean myrtle (Luma apiculata) (Burkart, Bárbaro et al., 1997).

For generations, the alerce has been considered one of the species of greatest cul- tural value — emblematic of South America's temperate forests — due to its great size, longevity, the physiognomy of its forests and its usage by humans, which dates back to thousands of years (Donoso, 1995; Lara, 1998 in Premoli et al., 2004).

This threatened species is an outstanding universal value, being the second longest- living species in the world (> 3,600 years). Furthermore, these specific populations are of great value due to their extremely high genetic singularity in the whole extension of their distribution, which makes them a key reservoir for the





species' conservation (Premoli et al., 2000 a and b).

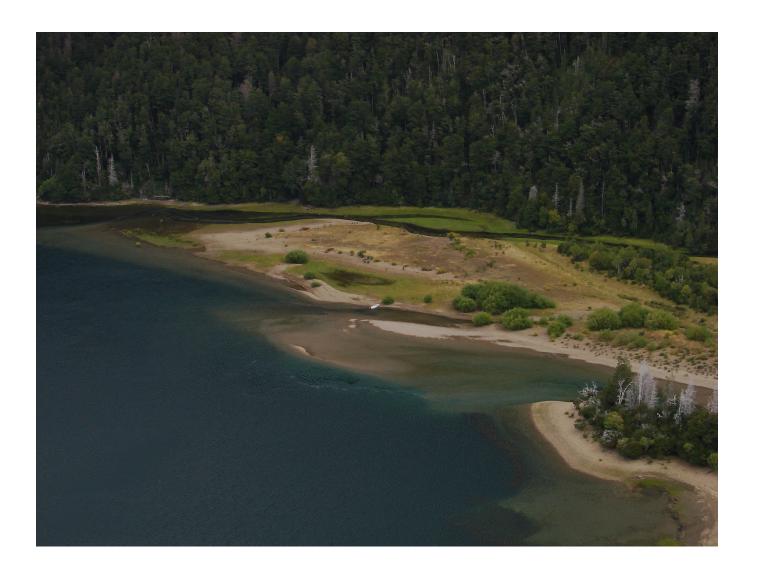
Of the species' total distribution, a great portion of its genetic variation in Argentina and Chile is found in the northern areas of PNLA and its adjoining buffer zone. Thus, these populations are important for the conservation of the whole of the species; they are also potential refugia for genetic diversity (Premoli, Souto et al., 2004). In its riparian environments, PNLA contains numerous habitats that are apt for the establishment of new individuals. In contrast to the slope forests, where many stands contain mainly mature individuals, the riparian groves exhibit a high percentage of small-diameter stands.

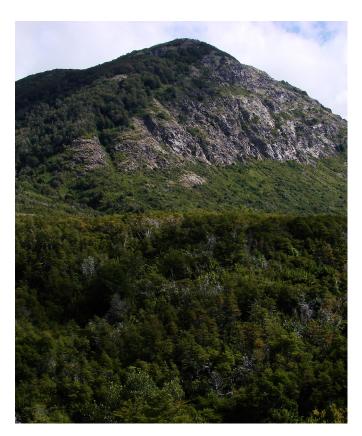
This type of habitat is normally subject to a high frequency of fluvial disturbances, which favour the establishment of alerce seedlings (Veblen, Armesto et al., currently in press). It is possible to observe the development of young alerce groves, the result of localized regeneration that began with surviving trees in wildfire

refugia near the shores of rivers and lakes, where fires' lesser intensity allowed for the survival of a few isolated individuals (Kitzberger, Pérez et al., 2000).

Unlike other alerce forests, which show signs of alteration due to exploitation, live- stock farming or fire, the alerce forest in PNLA is in an excellent state of conservation, which ensures the undisturbed occurrence of natural phenomena and hence guarantees the conditions for the long-term viability of the species' natural populations.

From the point of view of the richness and composition of fauna, the Park includes the groups typical of the Valdivian District, with some representatives of its ecotone with the Patagonian steppe (Burkart et al., 1997). The Park's fauna assemblage comprises 23 mammal species, 133 bird species, 11 amphibian species, six species of native fish, three reptile species, and numerous invertebrates including important endemisms.





Remarkable among the mammals is the huemul (Hippocamelus bisulcus), the only species of native South American deer in danger of extinction at the international level (IUCN, 2015) and at national level for Argentina and Chile. The nominated property has several populations that are key for the conservation of the species. Because of its importance, the species has been designated as an Argentine Natural National Mon- ument, as well as a Natural Provincial Monument for the provinces of Santa Cruz, Chubut and Río Negro. It is listed in CITES Appendix I as a High-Value Vertebrate Species (HVVS) at PNLA and other protected areas where it is found. In Chile, the species is protected by Law No. 19,473. It is also listed in the Convention on the Con-servation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn Convention, Appendix I). Other notable mammal species include the pudú (Pudu puda), one of South America's smallest deer; and the kodkod or guigna cat (Leopardus guigna), the smallest, most distribution- restricted feline in America (Acosta and Lucherini, 2008). Also remarkable is the monito del monte (Dromiciops gliroides) endemic to Patagonia and considered a "living fossil" since it is the sole extant species of the ancient Microbiotheria order of marsupials (Mon- jeau, 2006; Díaz M. and Teta, 2008; Fasola, Cassini et al., 2008). Notable among the endemic birds that are considered "rare" in Argentina are the torrent duck (Merganetta armata), the Magellanic woodpecker (Campephilus magellani- cus) and the Chilean pigeon (Columba araucana); all are well represented in the Park. The Park also contains threatened species such as the Andean condor (Vultur gryphus), the Chilean flamingo (Phoenicopterus chilensis), and the bronze-winged duck (Speculanas specularis). Among the amphibians, the protected area has the strictly endemic species Batrachyla fitzroya, which is present only in Isla Grande in Menéndez lake; and three species ex- clusive to Patagonia: the gracile frog (B. antartandica), the short-brow frog (B. taeniata), and the Emerald forest frog (Hylorina sylvatica). The Park is an important sweet-water reservoir. Its protected status helps to ensure the water quantity and quality for a significant portion of the streams born at its head- waters. This in turn allows the area to sustain sub-basins and minor water bodies, the only ones in northern Patagonia that are free from salmonidae. In summary, the nominated property is a protected area relevant for the long-term viability of the natural features that conform the biodiversity structure, functioning and self-regeneration of important forest ecosystems — in particular, the communities of millennial alerces, in the most southern and eastern portion of the Valdivian ecoregion (see Map 3: Vegetation of the Valdivian Ecoregion).

Statement of Integrity

The nominated property contains 36% of the alerce forests in Argentina, including the forest masses with the greatest genetic variability on the eastern slopes of the An- des, and the oldest in the country. These forests are Argentina's largest alerce forests granted the fullest protection of national law, and the second largest alerce forests in Chile and Argentina. These alerce communities are immersed in vast areas of forests, which include most of the relevant communities in the northern Andean-Patagonian forest (Cordilleran cypress, lenga beech, coihue, Antarctic beech, mayten, Chilean myr- tle, male mañíu (Podocarpus nubigenus). The forests contain even Guaitecas cypress, tepa, huahuán (Laureliopsis phillippiana), and pitra (Myrceugenia exsucca) in excellent state of conservation, and constitute key habitats for numerous species of native fauna.

PNLA includes 125,463 ha of "intangible area" (off-limits) as well as a Strict Nature Reserve, which together place 47,7% of the nominated property in IUCN category Ia. A further 6% is in category Ib, and corresponds to a sector of the Wilderness Area (see Map 5: Strict Nature Reserve and Wilderness Area Los Alerces National Park), whose conservation state is very good. Baseline biodiversity analyses at regional scale, espe- cially analyses for the area conducted in the last three years, highlight a high level of environmental integrity, using specific indicators for communities and species (Orel- Iana, 2013).

Independent analyses conducted using score cards in 1999 indicated 65% effective- ness for conservation success (Rusch, 2002). Since then, the conditions for protection and management of the property have been strengthened.

Between 2011 and 2014, the National Parks Administration implemented Manage- ment Efficiency Measurement (MEM), using a quali-quantitative tool of its own design that is applied



to all areas of the system. Results from the first three years of measure- ments for the protected area indicate a satisfactory level of management, placing the Park's score at approximately 64% efficiency, which is the average value for protected areas worldwide.

PNLA is a significant, representative and well-preserved sample of the Valdivian Temperate Forests Ecoregion. For more than 75 years, its legal status as a highly protected area — part of the National System of Protected Areas administered by APN — and its management according to this status were essential to maintaining and strengthening the conditions conducive to the preservation of the biological make-up, the ecological functions and the continuity of relevant processes at landscape scale. Maintaining these conditions ensures the viability of the species, populations and ecosystems that develop in the area in the long term.

At landscape scale, the nominated property — which includes an ample expanse of 190,121 ha, 72.3% of its area, free of roads or human occupation — is supported by numerous provincial protected areas in the Andean-North Patagonian Biosphere Reserve (ANPBR), which provide connectivity and integrity for the alerce forests and for species with ample habitat requirements. Further support is provided by Chile's protected area in Pumalin Park, which limits the nominated property on the western slope of the Andes; and by other neighbouring protected areas such as Chile's Hornopiren National Park and Futaleufú Nature Reserve, both part of Chile's Austral Rainy Temperate Forest Biosphere Reserve.

Likewise, the intact block included in the nominated property contains one of the most important populations of huemul, a species declared in danger of extinction, in northern Argentine Patagonia.



Protection and Management Requirements

Los Alerces National Park is part of the National System of Protected Areas in Ar- gentina (SNAP, Sistema Nacional de Áreas Protegidas de la Argentina) which is under the jurisdiction of the National Parks Administration, a self-governed body created by Law No. 12,103 in 1934, regulated by National Law No. 22,351 of 1980.

The latter law defined APN's self-government and functions, and created a collegiate body to lead and administer it. This law also created the National Park Rangers Body, in charge of vigilance and control to guarantee law enforcement in the system's protected areas.

For the nominated property, legal protection is provided by Decree No. 105,433 of 1937, endorsed by National Law No. 13,895/37 and National Law No. 19,292/71 (see Appendix 3: Law No. 19,292). The total protected surface is 259,822 ha, of which 188,379 are sensu stricto a National Park, one of the three categories of maximum pro- tection in Argentina. Thus the nominated property is an area of land in the public domain with the highest degree of legal protection.

The most important identified threats for the region are the potential fragmentation of natural landscape matrices, and the potential displacement of forest boundaries due to climate change. Several key factors are of assistance against these issues, and help- ful in protecting the area. The first is retaining the protected status categories for the nominated property (National Park, Strict Nature Reserve, Strict Wilderness Area and National Reserve). The second is enforcing the Argentine Native Forests Protection Act (Law No. 26,331, Ley de Protección de los Bosques Nativos de Argentina), which included new areas of adjacent forests in the highest conservation categories. A third factor is the Andean-North Patagonian Biosphere Reserve, designated by UNESCO in 2007. ANPBR encompasses an assemblage of protected areas of relevant geographical continuity, and contributes to the sustainable management of the Valdivian ecoregional corridor (APN, 2007) (see Map 2: Andean-North Patagonian Biosphere Reserve: Con- text for the Nominated Property. Los Alerces National Park, Argentina and Map 3: Vegetation of the Valdivian Ecoregion).

The Park's daily management is regulated by the Management Plan approved by Board Resolution No. 171/1997, which provides considerations for zoning consistent with the area's protection categories. The Management Plan is currently being revised and updated, as detailed in 5.c Means of Implementing Protective Measures and 5.e Property Management Plan or Other Management System.



State Party

State, Province or Region
Name of Property

Geographical coordinates to the nearest second

Textual description of the boundary(ies) of the nominated property

Argentina

Province of Chubut

Los Alerces National Park (PNLA)

Latitude: 420 34' 43.65" - 430 09' 52.78" S Longitude: 720 09' 29.55" - 710 34' 40.28" W

Central coordinate: 42o 51' 10.08" S, 71o 52' 22.08" W

The nominated property comprises the whole extension of Los Alerces National Park (PNLA), located in the mountain region in northwestern Chubut Province (Futaleufú Department), and covering a surface area of 259,822 ha. It was created as a National Reserve by Decree No. 105,433 in 1937; its boundaries and conservation categories were definitively established by Law No. 19,292 in 1971. Within Los Alerces National Park, the National Park per se occupies an area of 188,379 ha, equivalent to Cagetory II, IUCN. This area, which includes land and lakes, is completely free of human habitation and of fragmentation caused by roads. It includes 71,443 ha. of National Reserve (Category VI), inhabited by rural settlers as well as management and control personnel. This area also contains the main visitor services and facilities for the protected area. It possesses important conservation values in its own right, and serves as an inner buffer zone for the protected area, providing further protection for the integrity of the stricter conservation areas.

To the west, the boundary of the nominated property runs along the international border with the Republic of Chile, from the border's intersection with the Futaleufú or Grande River (PNLA's southern boundary) northward until reaching Cerro Bonete. From this point, the boundary runs west-east along cadastral lines until reaching the shore of Lake Rivadavia; then runs along the lake's northern shore; then along cadastral lines until reaching approximately 71o 37' W longitude. The eastern boundary follows cadastral lines running north-south between 71o 37' W and 71o 34' W, until reaching the confluence of the Futaleufú and Corintos rivers.

For the purposes of this nomination, the buffer zones in the nominated property's surroundings are defined as the adjacent areas located in the Andean-North Patagonian Biosphere Reserve (ANPBR) — established by UNESCO in 2007 — with other complementary areas that cover a 10-km wide strip around PNLA in Argentine territory. This implies an external buffer zone surface of approximately 135,870 ha. Within ANPBR, in adjacent sectors of the buffer zone to the north and south of PNLA, there are lands reserved for conservation by the Province of Chubut. Acting as a corridor, these also help to protect and strengthen the conservation of the nominated property.

Map

Criteria under which property is nominated

Draft Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

Attached is an A4 Map of the nominated property, which includes the adjacent areas that act as buffer zones.

- Criterion (vii): Contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance.
- Criterion (x): Contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of Outstanding Universal Value from the point of view of science or conservation.

Brief Synthesis

The nominated property comprises the totality of Los Alerces National Park and National Reserve (PNLA), which protects the millennial forests of alerce — Fitzroya cupressoides — an endangered species of outstanding universal value, being the second longest-living species on Earth (>3,600 years). The Park includes part of the forest masses with the greatest genetic variability on the eastern slopes of the Andes, with exclusive genetic variants and the oldest individuals in the country.

PNLA is located in the Valdivian Temperate Forests ecoregion; its biological importance resides in the presence of forest masses with an important degree of ecological integrity — including old-growth forest cores of high genetic singularity — ample variety of habitats, and unique fauna assemblages with species typical of the ecoregion. The history of the National Park's management, combined with the natural disposition of its mountain ranges and numerous bodies of water, have made it possible to maintain large sectors of the main forest communities strongly isolated from spontaneous usage and the threats resulting from anthropic activities. This situation favours a high environmental integrity in the conservation unit, as well as the preservation of landscapes of exceptional scenic quality.

The nominated property contains an important sweetwater reservoir which includes high basins and glaciers, and also preserves a significant portion of the wetlands that have been least impacted by anthropic activities, due to their isolation and to the presence of some of Patagonia's few water environments free from the invasion and seeding of salmonidae. Likewise, the nominated property's territorial extension allows it to sustain viable populations of its main species assemblages, and to maintain adequate functional connectivity and continuity of the relevant processes at landscape scale. The property includes a complete environmental gradient, from the glaciers and quarries in the high mountain to the communities of northern Patagonian temperate forest formations. This is a contributing factor to the resilience of these environments against the effects promoted by

climate change. The property's regional surroundings, including its buffer zone, help to fortify the aforementioned conditions, and hence the viability of long-term conservation, given its general integrity and the increasing implementations of joint management alternatives. PNLA, whose innermost reaches are accessible only by sailing huge lakes or walking narrow footpaths in a remote part of the Andes, is an invaluable asset that deserves a to be included amongst the sites distinguished as World Heritage.

- Criteria Under which Inscription is Proposed
- Criterion (vii): Contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance.

PNLA conserves a variety of landscapes and scenery that enables visitors to live unique experiences, and has the power to connect human beings with our own origins and transcendence, bringing us nearer to the pulse of Nature. The Park contains an extensive system of interconnected, clear-water lakes and rivers, that display the most extraordinary shifting hues of green, blue and turquoise. These water bodies are surrounded by lush temperate Valdivian forests in an environment of mountain ranges, glaciers and eternal snow. Alerce forests complete a unique, majestic landscape, and confer upon it an outstanding natural aesthetic among the Andean-Patagonian forests. Thus, the alerce is the heart and emblem of the Park, an imposing and silent witness of Earth's natural history and the passage of more than 100 human generations. In these magnificent natural surroundings, PNLA offers an outstanding array of memorable experiences, from walking rocky paths toward a serene stroll in the forest, to the contemplation of the immense landscape on the lake shores.

- Criterion (x): Contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of Outstanding Universal Value from the point of view of science or conservation.

PNLA is an area of great value for the conservation of biological diversity in the Valdivian Temperate Forest, an outstanding and priority ecoregion for conservation worldwide. This ecoregion has developed in marked biogeographic insularity, in which important speciation processes have taken place, as evidenced by the presence of relictual genera, numerous endemisms, and threatened species.

PNLA's remarkable biological relevance resides mainly in the presence of great continuous forest masses that exhibit an important degree of ecological integrity; as well as great variety of habitats and unique species

assemblages, all of which reside in environments in a very good state of conservation. PNLA contains approximately 7,407 ha of millennial virgin forests of alerce, a species that for generation has been considered of the greatest cultural value, emblematic of South America's temperate forests due to its longevity. The alerce — the second longest-living species in the world — is a threatened species. The populations in PNLA are of very high value given their extremely high genetic singularity, which makes them a key reservoir for the species' conservation, together with the populations in the nominated property's northern buffer zone.

From the point of view of the richness and composition of fauna, the Park includes the groups typical of the Valdivian District, with some representatives of its ecotone with the Patagonian steppe. Specially remarkable is the huemul (Hippocamelus bisulcus), the only species of native South American deer in danger of extinction worldwide (IUCN, 2015), endangered at national level in Argentina and Chile. The nominated property has several populations that are key for the conservation of the species.

PNLA — an important sweet-water reservoir, whose protected status helps to ensure the water quantity and quality for a significant portion of a basin's headwaters — sustains sub-basins and minor water bodies, the only ones in northern Patagonia that are free from salmonidae. To summarize, the nominated property is a protected area relevant for the long-term viability of the natural features that conform the biodiversity structure, functioning and self-regeneration of these important forest ecosystems — specially for the communities of millennial alerces — in the most southern and eastern portion of the Valdivian ecoregion.

- Statement of Integrity

The nominated property contains 36% of the alerce forests in Argentina, including the forest masses with the greatest genetic variability on the eastern slopes of the Andes and the oldest in the country. These are the largest alerce forests in Argentina to be granted the fullest protection of national law, and the second largest alerce forests in Chile and Argentina. These alerce communities are immersed in vast areas of forests, which include most of the relevant communities in the forests of northern Andean Patagonia (Cordilleran cypress, lenga beech, coihue, Antarctic beech, mayten, Chilean myrtle, male maniú (Podocarpus nubigenus) and even Guaitecas cypress; tepa (Laureliopsis philippiana, a monotypic genus), and pitra (Myrceugenia exsucca)) are in an excellent state of conservation, and constitute key habitats for numerous species of native fauna.

PNLA is a significant, representative and well-preserved sample of the Valdivian Temperate Forests Ecoregion. For more than 75 years, its legal status as a highly protected

area — part of the National System of Protected Areas administered by APN — and its management according to this status have been essential to maintaining and strengthening the conditions conducive to the preservation of the biological make-up, the ecological functions and the continuity of relevant processes at landscape scale. Maintaining these conditions ensures the viability of the species, populations and ecosystems that develop in the area in the long term. PNLA includes 125,463 ha of "intangible area" (off-limits) and Strict Nature Reserve, which together place 47,7% of the nominated property in IUCN category Ia. A further 6% is in category Ib, and corresponds to a sector of the Strict Wilderness Area, whose conservation state is very good.

At landscape scale, the nominated property — which includes an ample expanse of 190,121 ha, 72.3% of its area, free of roads or human occupation — is supported by numerous provincial protected areas in the Andean-North Patagonian Biosphere Reserve (ANPBR) in Argentina and adjacent protected areas in Chile. Together, these areas provide connectivity and integrity for the alerce forests and for species with ample habitat requirements. Likewise, the intact block included in the nominated property contains one of northern Argentine Patagonia's most important populations of huemul deer, a species in danger of extinction.

- Protection and Management Requirements

Los Alerces National Park is part of the National System of Protected Areas in Argentina (SNAP, Sistema Nacional de Áreas Protegidas de la Argentina) which is under the jurisdiction of the National Parks Administration, a self-governed body created by Law No. 12,103 in 1934, regulated by National Law No. 22,351 of 1980. Specific legal protection for the nominated property is provided by Decree No. 105,433 of 1937, endorsed by National Law No. 13,895/37 and National Law No. 19,292/71. The total protected surface is 259,822 ha, of which 188,379 are sensu stricto a National Park, one of the three categories of maximum protection in Argentina. Thus the nominated property is an area of land in the public domain with the highest degree of legal protection. The most important identified threats for the region

are the potential fragmentation of natural landscape matrices, and the potential displacement of forest boundaries due to climate change. Retaining the protected status categories for the nominated property (National Park, Strict Nature Reserve, Strict Wilderness Area and National Reserve) and enforcing the Argentine Native Forests Protection Act — Law No. 26,331, which included new areas of adjacent forests in the highest conservation categories — consolidate protection for the area and support the resolution of existing issues. Likewise, the creation of the Andean-North Patagonian Biosphere Reserve, designated by UNESCO in 2007,

articulates an assemblage of protected areas of relevant geographical continuity, and contributes to the sustainable management of the Valdivian ecoregional corridor.

The Park's daily management is regulated by the Management Plan approved by Board Resolution No. 171/1997, which provides considerations for zoning consistent with the area's protection categories. The Management Plan is currently being revised and updated; however, as was previously pointed out, all directives and actions for the area — inc2lu6ding general management, control and surveillance — are constantly enforced, and monitoring and research are ongoing.

Name and contact information of official local institution/agency

Argentine National Parks Administration (APN) and National Ministry of Tourism (MINTUR). APN:

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LOCATION MAP: BOUNDARIES OF THE NOMINATED PROPERTY AND BUFFER ZONE

