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WRANGELL RANGER
DISTRICT

from: Peter Branson
Po Box 1259
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Thoms Place

Attn: Ranger Robert Dalrymple,
Wrangell Ranger District
Po Box 51
Wrangell, AK 99929

Thanks for the opportunity to comment on the Wrangell Island Timber Sale DEIS. Of all the offered alternatives, I'll have to strongly support Alternative 1, the no action alternative. All the action alternatives harvest far too much timber, are unsustainable on both economic and ecological levels, and would cost the taxpayers up to and beyond \$15 million.

I work as a local hiking guide and have observed a rising demand from the growing tourism industry for hiking and other recreational activities, while at the same time cabins are closed, our few trails fall into disrepair, and recreation budgets are slashed. Imagine the world class trails and outdoor recreation infrastructure we could build on the island on even half the money you plan to spend to cut the last of the last big trees.

No one really knows the status of the wolf population on the island, and building more road access will only increase the already considerable hunting and trapping pressure on this vulnerable animal.

In conversations with Alaska DNR officials over 20 years ago they told me the watersheds on the island were already logged beyond Best Management Practices. We need more than the minimal buffers State and Federal law require. Stay out of drainages, especially Thoms Creek.

30 years ago, newly arrived as a Thoms Place homesteader, I was greeted to Thoms Place Marine Park with the sounds of yarders, chain saws, and heavy equipment as they created the huge clearcut on the hill above the bay. 30 years later I had hoped we were moved to a more diversified, sustainable economy of tourism, marine service, fishing and other sectors not so reliant on extraction of raw resources. Instead I learn you want to make the scar in our land bigger, and look backwards rather the forward. Sincerely, Peter Branson

Peter Branson
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