

Tobbie Cook

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Response to DEIS for the Tongass forest

As the spruce beetle devastates the Chugach, hemlock infestations sweep through the Tongass, and yellow cedars die out from low snowfall, hard freeze and low rain summers now is not the time to restrict logging nor set up a permanent guideline for logging in the national forests. As the climate warms and SE experiences more lightening storms we need to assess the situation over an extended time frame. Do not litigate yourself into a corner yet again. The old growth on the hillsides it's dying and no longer producing more oxygen than its using. As the hillsides dry out it has exceeded its carrying capacity for these trees and the resulting rot burns up more than they produce. Young healthy trees produce more oxygen than these old trees. I'm not for logging it all, the forests in the river and creek bottoms are still healthy and should be preserved.

It is also time to reconsider the roadless rule. Fuel costs have made air charters and marine travel near cost prohibitive. SE needs to build its infrastructure, power, water, and transportation. An example is a road to Kake to tie them into the power grid. If a road were to be built next to the waters of Fredric sound power lines put in place then the burrow could acquire the properties auction them off, thereby increasing their tax base. This would also open up entry level jobs as new lodges were built along the shore for our youth. Bait people, fish cleaners, and winter watchmen. Most hunting and freshwater fishing in SE is accessed through the road system. Expanding that system would open more opportunities for everyone not just the well to do tourists.

Thinking the tourist trade will bail the burrow out is a pipe dream encouraged by the industry that now controls access to much loved places, such as Denali park. They have exclusive rights to who toured the park as they have reserved the touring busses for years in advance, residents get one week a year to drive the park. Is that what we want here? It's already started in Glacier Bay, and Hobart.

Concerning the issue over the Tonka and other sale on pow. How much does it cost the forest service in legal fees when every sale is challenged by environmental groups? Is this why the sales are loosing monies? They challenge every individual sale costing the public in general for the court fees. This has to be resolved one way or the other. The Tongass is designated as multiple use, and these special interest groups need to be held accountable for the expenses they are placing on our forest management. I am still trying to find what these fees are and would like input on this.

Another issue I want info on and the public to be aware of is the monies that the Tongass

timber trust used to contribute to the doctors and hospitals in SE. This was insurance provided through union dues paid by loggers. DA Coon often replied that his troller was pretty much paid for through this fund he received as dr. Fees from loggers.

Also the schools and roads were at one time funded by a stumpage tax on timber logged. It has been replaced by federal dollars That are now possibly on the chopping block and may not be a guaranteed income for schools and road repair. Logging is directly responsible for road maintainence and as roads fall into disrepair they may be closed. The forest service has had to do this already in the lower 48.

The public needs to be educated on what is going on in our national forests. Do not let them be "privatized" by special interest groups in the name of conservation.

Tobbie Cook

Sent from my iPhone