

December 9, 2019

Alaska Roadless Rule
United States Forest Service
Alaska Region
Ecosystem Planning and Budget Staff
P.O. Box 21628
Juneau, AK 99802

Alaska Roadless Rulemaking #54511

Dear Forest Service Rulemaking Team:

I am writing to express my support for the Tongass National Forest to be fully exempt from the national Roadless Rule.

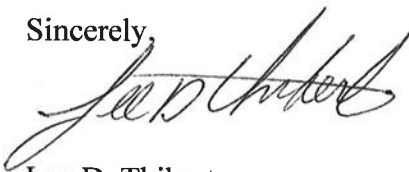
As someone familiar with the Alaska electric utility industry, I know how difficult it can be to provide electric service in Alaska, especially when infrastructure crosses mountainous and remote terrain. I support the efforts of my electric utility colleagues in Southeast Alaska to lift the Roadless Rule restrictions so they may more efficiently and economically maintain transmission line infrastructure and potentially develop new sources of renewable generation.

I also believe lifting the Roadless Rule restrictions offers the potential for increased economic activity that would benefit the Southeast region in particular and Alaska in general.

In my opinion, the Forest Service is part of the Department of Agriculture for a reason. As someone who was raised in the Midwest, I appreciate the cycle of planting, growth and harvest that comprises agriculture. Forests are not parks. I believe National Forests are intended to be multi-use, rather than simply being there to look at. The current application of the Roadless Rule in the Tongass limits not only the use of the land but also the potential economic benefits to Southeast Alaska.

I submit these comments as an individual and not as a representative of an organization.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lee D. Thibert', written in a cursive style.

Lee D. Thibert