

PUBLIC TESTIMONY BY PHILLIP GRAY
PRESENTED AT THE
JUNEAU COMMUNITY ROADLESS RULE PUBLIC MEETING
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PHILLIP GRAY: My name is Phillip Gray. I live at 4410 North Douglas Highway, Juneau, Alaska 99801.

I've lived in Juneau for over 50 years. I don't have a prepared statement, so I'm just going from memory. I worked for Fish and Game for over 20 years, about 17 to 18 years as a coho research biologist studying cohos throughout Southeast Alaska from Yakutat to Ketchikan. We did some of the first studies on ages of coho that were done, and we also did tagging of juvenile cohos to study harvest rates, migration routes, and timing.

So I've spent a lot of time on the ground in unlogged areas, and I know a lot about coho salmon and what they require. And I've also been in some areas that have been pretty heavily logged, where the areas have been pretty well destroyed.

The first one I remember was over in a place called Iris Meadows in Sitka where Fish and Game had proposed a transplant. It was just a beautiful area. And the commercial fishermen over there saw so much mud coming out of the streams they called up Fish and Game and said, "You guys better get over here and look at this."

So we traveled over there and went through the area, and it looked like it had been bombed. I mean, I remember one place where the whole hillside had slid off into a lake. We tried walking up one of the streams, and it was kind of an unstable pumice soil. And that had slid into the stream, so it was almost knee deep with all the soil that had slid into the stream. So that was one of my first experiences with clearcut logging.

And I also -- personally, myself -- I rely on the old-growth forest here for fishing and for deer hunting. One of my friends and I went deer hunting down in Whitewater Bay on Admiralty Island, which used to be one of Ralph Young's favorite bear hunting areas. We started out going through the logged area, which turned out to be almost impassible, because you fall into big holes, and you could spear yourself on some of the logging debris; so it was dangerous walking there.

And we got on the logging road that went up towards the mountain we wanted to hunt, and it was quite a ways. We walked 7 miles through this logging road. We never saw a single deer or any sign in 7 miles. I guess we saw one mayor. It was pretty tough walking. The alders had grown up pretty thick on this road. But in 7 miles, no sign of any life -- no deer or nothing. As soon as we stepped out into the old growth at the end of 7 miles and up in the headwaters, we started seeing deer sign all over. So that was another experience that convinced me that old-growth logging is dangerous and seriously damaging to both fish and deer.

Coho salmon require -- they're found in almost all little tiny streams and tributaries all over Southeast Alaska. Just little streams that you can almost step across or can step across seem to be some of the most important ones. They are found in marshes and sloughs and lakes and all these little tributaries, and they're seriously damaged by logging. There is no way you can avoid that. Putting roads in and old-growth logging just is not compatible with good-faith production.

So I'm in favor of that Alternative 1, keeping the roadless rule in place. I don't approve of any old-growth logging or roads in any more of the old-growth areas in Southeast Alaska.

Thank you.

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