

PUBLIC TESTIMONY BY JULIE KOEHLER
PRESENTED AT THE
JUNEAU COMMUNITY ROADLESS RULE PUBLIC MEETING
HELD: DECEMBER 16, 2019, JUNEAU, ALASKA

SUBMITTED DECEMBER 17, 2019, AS A UNIQUE LETTER TO THE UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE

JULIE KOEHLER: My name is Julie Koehler, J-U-L-I-E, K-O-E-H-L-E-R, 99802.

I have used the Tongass National Forest since 1985 for recreation, hunting, fishing, berry-picking, kayaking, and on and on. From my college education in fish and wildlife management, work as a naturalist, work as a biological technician, and my personal use of the forest over all these years, I understand the ecology of an old-growth forest and what happens after it's logged. Therefore, I support Alternative 1, the No-Action Alternative.

Like many hundreds of other Southeast Alaskans, I have spoken numerous times over the decades in favor of keeping Tongass old growth standing and intact. Forest Service officials know from the studies done by many, many researchers that keeping old growth stands intact is what needs to be done to protect our Fish and Wildlife resources and ensure their sustainability.

So no need for me to review what has already been pointed out by countless professionals and those of us who know this forest. Instead, I'm going to call out this whole proposal to exempt the Tongass from the roadless rule for what it is, a bald-faced sham, to end-run the wishes of the people who live here and who have had enough of the Forest Service and the State of Alaska trying to liquidated the old growth.

At the Forest Service's November 4th shameful and shameless dog and pony show on this proposal, we were told that exempting the Tongass from the roadless rule won't change how the forest is managed and moving toward the logging of second growth. If that were the case, then why is this exemption being proposed? It is a guise to do old-growth logging through road building.

Alternative 6, minimum impact? Ha. We all know that isn't so. We all know that the guise of this roadless rule exemption is eventually going to end up -- actually probably pretty quickly end up revising the Tongass Land Management Plan so it can incorporate this change and increase the old growth harvest level. And we all know it's a back-door entry into the Chugach National Forest. Our old growth is more valuable standing. Let's keep it standing. Alternative 1. No action.