



RESOLUTION: KIC 19-29

TITLE: A RESOLUTION OF THE TRIBAL COUNCIL OF THE KETCHIKAN INDIAN COMMUNITY (KIC) TO AUTHORIZE TRIBAL SUPPORT FOR APPLICATION OF NATIONAL ROADLESS RULE ON THE TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST AND TO AUTHORIZE STRONG SUPPORT FOR LASTING PROTECTION OF THE ROADLESS RULE

WHEREAS, the Ketchikan Indian Community (“KIC or the “Tribe”), is a federally recognized Tribal government organized under a Constitution and Bylaws (collectively, the “Constitution”) ratified on October 18, 2017, and previously organized under a Constitution and Bylaws ratified on January 16, 1979, and previously organized under a Constitution and Bylaws ratified on January 27, 1940, in each instance pursuant to Section 16 of the Indian Reorganization Act (“IRA”) of 1934 as amended; and

WHEREAS, the KIC Tribal Council (the “Tribal Council”) is the representative Tribal Government of the Tribe; and one of the tribe’s highest priorities is to protect customary and traditional hunting, fishing, and gathering areas and uses; and

WHEREAS, protection of the inherent right to harvest and use traditional and customary foods requires careful cultural stewardship and protection of the environmental and natural resources; and

WHEREAS, the care of the lands now classified as “inventoried roadless areas” in the Tongass National Forest stretches for millennia; and

WHEREAS, these lands not only provide Alaska Native people with food, they essentially define who we are and where we come from; and

WHEREAS, inventoried roadless areas conserve natural diversity, serve as a bulwark against the spread of invasive species, protect healthy watersheds, and help ensure the continued protection of indigenous fish and wildlife; and

WHEREAS, the Tongass National Forest represents one of the highest carbon stores in the world and conservation of intact inventoried roadless areas on the Tongass is essential for maintaining Alaskan/American resilience to climate change; and

WHEREAS, the Roadless Rule prevents the disturbance of soils and wasteful construction of damaging roads in inventoried roadless areas; and

- WHEREAS,** according to the State of Alaska, Tongass timber is uncompetitive because of permanent and fundamental changes in global timber markets, high labor costs, distance from markets, and less expensive substitutes; and
- WHEREAS,** the Tongass timber industry represents less than one percent of jobs and earnings in Southeast Alaska; and
- WHEREAS,** there are over 5,000 miles of roads already crisscrossing the Tongass National Forest, fragmenting valuable wildlife habitat, threatening salmon by blocking fish passage. And serving as the primary source of sediment into fish streams; and
- WHEREAS,** spending millions of taxpayer dollars to build roads in inventoried Tongass roadless areas makes no economic sense, particularly given the Forest Service's enormous road maintenance backlog, and
- WHEREAS,** at hearings held across Southeast Alaska in 2000 on the proposed Roadless Rule, nearly 60 percent of the Southeast Alaskans supported including the Tongass National Forest in the final roadless rule; and
- WHEREAS,** after the hearing held in Ketchikan during the summer of 2002, the draft supplemental environmental impact prepared to evaluate recommendations for designating additional inventoried roadless areas on the Tongass as "wilderness", the Ketchikan Daily News reported that roughly 85 percent of the public who testified supported more "wilderness";
- WHEREAS,** the State of Alaska petitioned the USDA to exempt Tongass inventoried roadless areas from the Roadless Rule on January 19, 2018
- WHEREAS,** for all of the above reasons, the State's petition severely mischaracterizes the actual extent and impacts of the Roadless Rule on Southeast Alaska; and
- WHEREAS,** the State's petition ignores the fact that the USDA narrowly tailored the Roadless Rule to limit only two activities in roadless areas, road construction, and commercial logging; and
- WHEREAS,** the State of Alaska's petition ignores the rule's established exceptions, including Federal Aid Highway projects connecting communities, access to mining claims, and logging incidental to otherwise permitted activities, including utility corridors and hydropower projects; and
- WHEREAS,** on August 2, 2018, the Forest Services signed a memorandum of understanding with the State of Alaska to develop an Alaska-specific roadless rule that addresses management of inventoried roadless areas on the Tongass National Forest; and
- WHEREAS,** any rule that weakens or eliminates roadless rule protections in what became Inventoried Roadless Areas of the Tongass National Forest will substantially affect the existing 2016 Tongass Land Management Plan Amendment; and
- WHEREAS,** the 2016 Plan Amendment excluded all roadless areas from the available timber base, the agency's failure to consult and coordinate forest planning with KIC will impair the Tribe's ability to fulfill its responsibility to protect the general welfare and security of tribal citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Forest Service has not explained adequately why it has failed to fulfill its' responsibilities to consult with the Tribe; and

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska resists all efforts to develop and work in a government to government relationship with Tribes and did not consult with KIC before filing petition with the USDA; and

WHEREAS, then Governor Walker appointed a single Alaska Native to the Alaska Roadless Rule Citizens Advisory Committee to represent all tribal perspectives, a gigantic and unrealistic burden for one person; and

WHEREAS, the state and federal governments have demonstrated an unwillingness and an inability to adequately consult, coordinate, and accommodate with tribal interests on the potential implementation of an Alaska-specific roadless rule.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Forest Service must initiate consultation, coordination and accommodation of tribal interest in any changes to Tongass Land Management Plan connected with this rulemaking process; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the only changes to the Roadless Rule that KIC can support is an update to the inventory used to define inventoried roadless areas subject to the Rule on the Tongass to include approximately 350,000 acres excluded from the 1995 inventory used for developing the 2001 Roadless Rule, because the agency assumed approved logging development would occur- when it did not; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the Ketchikan Indian Community strongly supports lasting protection for all inventoried roadless areas within the Tongass National Forest as provided in the Roadless Rule.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at a duly convened meeting of the Ketchikan Indian Community Tribal Council, assembled this 15 day of July, 2019 at 2960 Tongass, Ketchikan, Alaska 99901, by a vote of: 8 FOR and 0 AGAINST

NS

7/15/19

Norman Skan, President

Date

ATTEST:

Gloria Burns

7/15/19

Gloria Burns, Secretary

Date

Effective: July 15, 2019 KIC 19-29			
Roll Call	Yes	No	Absent
SKAN			
JOHNSON	X		
BURNS	X		
FRANK	X		
PICKRELL	X		
BENNETT	X		
RAMIREZ	X		
LEASK			
GUTHRIE	X		
WILLIAMS	X		