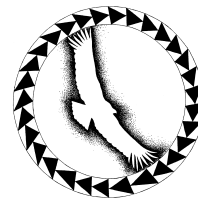




InterTribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council

P.O. Box 1523 Ukiah, CA 95482 Phone (707) 468-9500

InterTribal Cultural Conservation for Sinkyone Indian Lands



December 17, 2019

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Attn: USDA Secretary Perdue
Alaska Roadless Rule
USDA Forest Service, Alaska Region
Ecosystem Planning and Budget Staff
P.O. Box 21628
Juneau, Alaska 99802-1628

Submitted Electronically via USFS Web Form

RE: Alaska Roadless Rulemaking

Dear Secretary Purdue:

The InterTribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council is a consortium of ten federally recognized Northern California Indian Tribes that since 1986 has worked to protect and restore Northern California's coastal temperate rainforest. The rainforest of our home region comprises the southernmost tip of the great Pacific Coastal Temperate Rainforest ("Cascadia") that stretches from here north to Prince William Sound in Alaska.

The Tongass National Forest is situated within the traditional territorial lands and waters of the Tlingit, Tsimshian and Haida peoples. For countless generations, these Tribal Nations have been responsible for helping maintain the complex balance of the Tongass's ecosystems through adherence to their traditional beliefs, knowledge and understandings based upon the laws of the land and deep respect for the rights of nature. The biological diversity and abundance of this great rainforest is due to millennia of deep relationship and constant interactions between Indigenous peoples and the other communities of living beings in these places.

The Tongass remains crucial to the wellbeing, identity and cultural survival of its original peoples. Any action taken with regard to the Tongass must not result in negative impacts to the traditional values, customary practices, and cultural lifeways of Tlingit, Tsimshian and Haida communities, families and individuals who remain deeply connected to these lands and waters. This includes negative impacts to the native animal and plant species because all of the Tongass's ecological values are also Tribal cultural values.

The Sinkyone Council supports the No-Action alternative because other alternatives would result in irreparable harm to Tlingit, Tsimshian and Haida peoples and their cultural lifeways, and to the precious and irreplaceable ecosystems of the Tongass.

We strongly urge that you select the No-Action alternative. As one of the last remaining intact coastal rainforests in the world, the Tongass is home to a number of unique species such as the Alexander Archipelago Wolf, Queen Charlotte Goshawk, black and brown bears, Sitka black-tailed deer, and many others that are—in the Indigenous view of life—regarded as relatives.

A plethora of evidence points to any Roadless Rule exemption alternatives resulting in irreparable harm to the Tongass, including negative impacts to numerous kinds of plants, fish, mammals, and other forms of life.

InterTribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council is a Nonprofit Consortium of California Indian Tribes

●Cultural Conservation ●Native Stewardship ●Watershed Rehabilitation ●Cultural Ecology Education

For the sake of Tlingit, Tsimshian and Haida peoples, the Tongass, and all who call this place their home we ask that you select the No-Action alternative.

Thank you,

Mary Norris, Cahto Tribe of Laytonville Rancheria

Priscilla Hunter, Coyote Valley Band of Pomo Indians

Suzanne Romero, Hopland Band of Pomo Indians

Debra Ramirez, Little Lake Band of Pomo Indians

Mariah Rosales, Potter Valley Tribe

Mona Oandasan, Round Valley Indian Tribes

Jaime Boggs, Robinson Rancheria of Pomo Indians

Crista Ray, Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians

Buffey Wright, Sherwood Valley Rancheria of Pomo Indians