

**City of Port Alexander**  
**P.O. Box 8068 Port Alexander, AK 99836-8068 (907)-568-2211**

**Resolution 24-03**

**Urging the Department of Agriculture to include the Tongass National Forest in the proposed national old growth forest plan amendment rule.**

WHEREAS, The City of Port Alexander is incorporated as a second class city in the state of Alaska; and

WHEREAS, the City of Port Alexander supports its citizens in their use of productive forest lands for harvest of deer, fish, plants and small-scale use of forest products; and

WHEREAS, our community members commonly use Tongass National Forest lands in the watersheds of Baranof Island; and

WHEREAS, old growth and mature forests provide the best sources for the viewing, hunting and gathering of animals, fish and plants, as well as the best trees in our traditional territory is of critical importance to protecting and preserving our gathering practices, subsistence activities, culture, and ways-of-life; and

WHEREAS, large scale clearcut logging creates areas that are less pleasant for residents and visitors to view and less productive for hunting and gathering; and

WHEREAS, our community would prefer to enjoy the remaining old growth and mature forests rather than spending inordinate amounts of time fighting to protect them from large scale harvest; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Agriculture (the Department) is preparing an environmental impact statement that will “propose to amend all land management plans for units of the National Forest System . . . to include consistent direction to conserve and steward existing and recruit future old-growth forest conditions,” 88 Fed. Reg. 88,042 (Dec. 20, 2023); and

WHEREAS, the preliminary proposed action the Department is considering would prohibit commercial logging of old-growth trees in all national forests *except* the Tongass National Forest; and

WHEREAS, instead of providing for the protection of old-growth and mature trees in the Tongass, the preliminary proposed action would allow commercial logging of old-growth on the Tongass where “necessary to allow for implementation of the Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy,” 88 Fed. Reg. at 88,047; and

WHEREAS, the City of Port Alexander does not support this exemption, at least not for large-scale industrial uses, and urges the Department to remove it from the preliminary proposed rule; and



WHEREAS, no exemption is needed to allow for implementation of beneficial aspects of the Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy that Port Alexander supports, which include refocusing forest management on restoration, recreation, and resilience, and identifying opportunities for investment to reflect the needs and opportunities in the region; and

WHEREAS, an exemption that allows for continued commercial old-growth logging and logging of mature forests would threaten the ways-of-life of our citizens and force the citizens of Port Alexander to continue to use its resources to fight logging proposals and advocate for durable protection of our traditional territory; and

WHEREAS, although the Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy provides for an end to large-scale old-growth timber sales on the Tongass, the Forest Service has continued to offer old-growth timber sales under the strategy; and

WHEREAS, the Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy has not been adopted or defined through regulations or other durable policy guidance and can easily be changed by a future federal administration; and

WHEREAS, durable protection for old-growth and mature trees in the Tongass is needed; and

WHEREAS, the preliminary proposed action also includes an exception that allows old-growth logging for culturally significant uses, 88 Fed. Reg. at 88,047; and

WHEREAS, the City of Port Alexander strongly supports the culturally significant uses exception, which is important for ensuring that tribal citizens may continue the selective cutting of trees needed to practice their heritage.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Port Alexander supports protecting the remaining old-growth and mature trees in the Tongass from any large-scale commercial logging and urges the Department to remove the Tongass exemption from the proposed national old-growth forest plan amendment to ensure that the old-growth and mature trees of the Tongass are protected from large-scale commercial logging; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Port Alexander urges the Department to retain the culturally significant uses exception.

PASSED AND APPROVED by a duly constituted quorum of the Port Alexander City Council this 3 day of June, 2024.

VOTE 6 YEAS, 0 NAYS

  
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CORY GIFFORD, MAYOR

ATTEST   
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MOLLY KIMZEY, CITY CLERK