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First name: Emma

Last name: Lear

Organization:

Title:

Comments: See attached file(s)

The following text was copy/pasted from an attached letter. The system cannot display the formatting, graphics, or tables from the attached original.

To whom it may concern,

I am writing on behalf of my concerns of exempting the Tongass National Forest from the Roadless Area Conservation Rule. I understand that there has been a great loss of money when it comes to managing this area, but I am concerned with what could happen when logging becomes available.

The Tongass National Forest holds great biodiversity and is a huge ecosystem to a variety of plants and animals. I am deeply concerned with how the logging industry would affect the biodiversity of this ecosystem. Plants and animals live off of each other, and with the removal of all the trees, animals would suffer. There would be loss of life that would be detrimental to the ecosystem. Every living organism is dependent of each other, and with the destruction of their habitats, we could see a great loss of numbers of certain species. Rivers would be polluted that would cause the fish to die, and this area relies on fishing for their economy and their food source. Fishing is not just for sport; it is a need for survival in this area. The people that live in this area would lose so many resources that they would not be able to get back. They would have to move from their homes and build somewhere else. It would not just be hurting the animals in this area; it would be hurting the people.

Plus, this would be very expensive to plan out. This is a vast area of trees and no roads would be easy to navigate through it. There would be more money lost in the building of these roads than what would be gained from logging. This area is also known for its old- growth logging and a small amount of good logging. Loggers would have to destroy thousands of old-growth trees that would not be any use to them in order to get to the good trees. That is more money spent on old trees than good money made on good trees. Yes, you could try to grow more trees in the area, but how long would that take? Plus, this ecosystem would never be the same again. It would take hundreds of years for this ecosystem to thrive in the way it does now, but it may it could possibly never go back to the same way.

Also, I want to touch more on the importance of the salmon that thrive in this area. There rivers that are cold and clean that provide a great habitat for spawning salmon. With logging going around these rivers, the rivers are polluted. These salmon die after they spawn, and the fish carcasses put tons of nutrients back into the flow of the river. They also provide food for bears, wolves, and birds. Destroying this habitat for the salmon would hurt the other living organisms around them.

This is a vast ecosystem that so many plants, animals, and people rely on to survive. The people in this area use this for their growing economy and without it, they would have to move on. This is a great way to make money, but in the long run it could do more damage than good. It is an expensive project that would take years to build and, in the end, it could cost more than the money that it could potentially bring in. I personally do not want to see this area opened up for logging. It should be left untouched and used in a way for good, not for destruction.

Please take all of this into consideration when you're thinking about destroying a mass ecosystem. It's not just about making money, it's about keeping an ecosystem and its biodiversity alive.

Thank You,

Emma Lear

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