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Comments: As someone born and raised in the soft shelter of the Tongass rainforest, I can provide testimony to the case that this rainforest has value that cannot be fathomed by economists. I can also provide examples of how keeping The Tongass "roadless" has more economic benefits than clearcutting and exporting lumber.

The Tongass Rainforest has cultural significance for many, as we are a part of the whole web of life.

This is why Alaska is precious. Nature is doing its thing.

This is why tourists want to come to Alaska in the first place, and this is why high-skilled laborers and tech industry workers want to move to Alaska and get a job.

Alaska has intact ecologies.

The Tongass is a salmon nursery. An international treasure.

There is a constant exchange of nutrients from the ocean to the rainforest (and back) by all animals that nurtures an abundance of wild foods that the first people of Alaska appreciated for survival, and many still depend on today and likely more so in the future.

Clearcutting kills habitat for all animals, kills responsible and sustainable logging jobs (that would produce a higher value lumber), destabilizing slopes causing potential landslides in the future by reducing water retention, and it always looks ugly.

Logging roads are often made without hydrodynamics in mind, leading to sediment washing out into potential salmon spawning grounds.

Personally, I love the Tongass also as a place of healing I can come back to and breathe fresh air and be in nature and find my center. I enjoy hiking deep in the rainforest and high up on the mountains. I enjoy boating and kayaking because I can look at forests, some still recovering from clearcutting in the 70's.

Our current administration is on a course of deregulation, trying to undo any environmental protections (for whatever reasons). We need to stand up for the defenseless and irreplaceable treasures. Keep the roadless rules unchanged.

I have attached a document with some studies on the benefits of old-growth (mature) forests in the pacific northwest.

Thank you for listening to the people.

[See attachment containing the following technical resource: "The Economic Benefits of Old-Growth Forests in the Pacific Northwest: An Overview"]

[Position]

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