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Organization:

Title:

Comments: DEIS Comments Tongass Exemption Roadless Rule

11/25/19

These are COMMENTS ON THE DEIS TONGASS EXEMPTION RULEMAKING FROM NATIONAL ROADLESS RULE which is PROJECT 54511.

The NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE is what I support. The USFS should keep the current roadless rule as it is.

I have worked in the Tongass as a timber contractor. I have flown over parts of the forest and taken the state ferry through it. This has caused me to value the intact forest which is an important driver of Southeast economy.

The Roadless Rule in the Tongass has not stopped all road building. Since 2009, there have been 57 road access projects in the roadless area for mining exploration, hydroelectric development, electric intertie access and community purposes. Why has the public not been made aware of it.

The roadless rule only affects the timber program which is operating at a loss anyway and is subsidized heavily by American taxpayers. \$30 million are lost annually by the subsidization. And the Government Accounting Office of Washington DC has projected a loss of \$100 million in the timber program even if there is an additional 300 million board feet harvested in the next 4 years. This is outrageous.

Even Representative Don Young says there is not a viable long term timber industry for the Tongass.

Intact habitat and the retention of old growth forest are extremely important. The Tongass stores more carbon than any other national forest. It plays an important role in moderating the climate change impacts. This is not considered by our politicians.

I also have a problem with this whole DEIS process. Why was \$2.2 million given to the State and the forest industry to participate in this process? Some of that money should have been used to fight wildfires in the state. Why was there no money for the 6 federally recognized tribes in the Tongass area to participate in the process? Why were these same tribes not treated as sovereign nations?

Keep the status quo roadless rule in the Tongass.

Respectfully submitted,

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[Attachment is a Word document version of the same comment above.]

[Position]