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Last name: Weller

Organization: City of Pelican, Alaska

Title: City Councilwoman

Comments: CITY OF PELICAN, ALASKA

RESOLUTION 2025-3

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PELICAN, ALASKA SUPPORTING

WHEREAS; Pelican, Alaska is located in the heart of the Tongass National Forest, one of the world's largest remaining temperate rainforests.

AND; The Tongass National Forest is considered an invaluable home and resource to the community of Pelican, its visitors, the commercial fishing industry, and to over 400 species of wild animals.

WHEREAS; The Tongass Forest Plan, also called the Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan is a comprehensive review of the ecological, social, and economic conditions within the forest, used to inform the upcoming revision of the Land Management Plan which will guide future resource management activities on the Tongass.

AND; The Tongass Forest Plan has not been fully reviewed and revised since 1997 and a new plan is needed to shape the future of land management within the Tongass Forest.

WHEREAS; The City of Pelican supports maintaining an intact, healthy Tongass National Forest through the upcoming Revision Plan, and for specific components of the draft assessment centered around this goal. The plan must protect intact land and water resources to ensure long-term ecosystem health, in addition to supporting resilient, thriving cultural resources, economies, and communities in the region.

WHEREAS; The current draft assessment highlights several priority areas which require robust protection, including:

- Salmon runs and other wildlife habitat
- Homelands, sacred places, and traditional harvesting grounds of Alaska Native people
- Subsistence - both customary and traditional uses
- The temperate rainforest archipelago and ecosystems
- Recreation and scenic beauty

WHEREAS; The City of Pelican shares in the draft plan's endorsement of stronger protections for these areas and encourages the Forest Service to retain these sections of the plan. We urge the Forest Service to integrate Indigenous Knowledge and subsistence rights into the plan. Traditional Ecological Knowledge strengthens conservation and ensures resilience for future generations. A co-stewardship model for managing the Tongass honors the rights and sovereignty of Tribal Governments.

WHEREAS; The inclusion of protections for small timber mill operators is also extremely important to include in the Forest Plan Revision. Small timber mills have helped create and sustain communities across Southeast Alaska but are often outbid, forced out of timber sales that they depend on by larger mills. We hope to see meaningful change in the timber industry, and feel that the entire region would directly benefit from the transition away from archaic clear cutting to truly sustainable logging practices.

WHEREAS; Environmental and profiteering threats could degrade the Tongass, harming ecosystems and communities. The new Tongass Forest Plan must prioritize protections that uphold the integrity of the Tongass's vast ecosystems and align with the draft assessment's findings as well as local knowledge and support for a balanced approach. By doing so, the Forest Service will safeguard the long-term sustainability of this vital forest.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

The Pelican City Council supports the response from Southeast Alaska Conservation Council regarding the Tongass Draft Assessment.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED THIS 20th DAY OF February, 2025.

Signed: Patricia Phillips, Mayor

Attest: Lattieca Stewart, City Clerk

(Official Sealed Resolution attached to comment submission 2/21/25)