

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 2/25/2025 9:00:00 AM  
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Title:  
Comments: See attached

Kathy Hansen

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February 24, 2025

Tongass National Forest Supervisor's Office  
Attn: Erin Mathews, Revision Plan Coordinator  
648 Mission Street, Suite 110  
Ketchikan, AK 99901  
RE: Tongass Land Management Plan Revision

Dear Erin Mathews,

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the assessment phase of the Tongass Land Management Plan revisions. Southeast Alaska Fishermen's Alliance (SEAFa) is a non-profit commercial fishing association that represents our 300+ members involved in the salmon, crab, shrimp and longline fisheries of Southeast Alaska.

The Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska is the largest, most diverse and unique national forest in the United States. The Tongass National Forest is a temperate rainforest ecosystem, marine waters with healthy salmon streams & habitat, wildlife, and glaciers. This combination of features provide for important traditional subsistence & customary uses, commercial fishing, tourism and recreational activities.

To the commercial fishing industry, protecting the habitat and water quality for the salmon is paramount. This can be done by maintaining the protections provided by previous versions of the Tongass land management plan using most stringent criteria between federal and state laws of air and water quality standards, riparian stream buffers as outlined in the Tongass Timber reform Act. In addition, maintain all current salmon habitat, stream classifications, restorations, enhancement and protections for all stages of salmon. Please allow as written in ANILCA salmon enhancement projects as appropriate by Alaska Private Non-Profit salmon hatcheries.

There are many anchorages, near shore commercial fisheries, shellfish pot storage areas, aids to navigation communication and weather forecast data sites important to the commercial fishing industry that we need to maintain access to.

Within the plan revision documents provided there is such an overlap between sections, it is difficult to envision what the plan looks like as an integrated whole product, it is

difficult to comment on specific sections. The economic section is weak on the economic value of the Tongass National Forest to the commercial fishing industry and

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the impact and importance to the local communities. The 2024 SeaBank Report would be an excellent reference for the assessment team to review for information on the importance of the Tongass to Southeast Alaska. For example, ? Commercial fishing in Southeast Alaska supports more than 10,000 jobs and yields as much as \$800 million per year in economic outputs to local communities (page 33).

? Add in the visitor services industry that supports an additional 6,500 jobs and the total economic output for the two sectors combined rises to \$1 billion per year (page 33).

While the assessment sections touched on it, it will be important in looking forward to consider that streams that support salmon could change as glaciers melt and some stream become habitat that currently are not while others become too warm or cease to exist to support salmon.

Sincerely,

Kathy Hansen  
Executive Director

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2024 SeaBank Report 2024 SeaBank Report.pdf - Google Drive  
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