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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Wrangell Island Timber Sale

Dear Mr. Dalrymple,

The Forest Service's Preferred Alternative for the Wrangell Island Timber Sale is unsustainable and not economical for Wrangell residents or the region. Alternative 2 proposes logging 65 million board feet of old-growth from 5,309 acres and bulldozing 32 miles of new road. The new roads will cost nearly \$5.5 million dollars.

According to the Forest Service's own data, all the action alternatives are economically infeasible. That means that under every scenario considered the American public would be paying companies to log the ancient trees on Wrangell Island.

Worse still is that 100 percent of Alaska Yellow Cedar will likely be exported without local processing. If the Preferred Alternative is selected, more than 10 million board feet of Alaska Yellow Cedar and nearly 5 million board feet of Western Red Cedar could be logged and sent out of state or overseas without local, value-added manufacturing. The Preferred Alternative will damage the largest remaining block of intact old-growth on Wrangell Island above Rainbow Falls and Shoemaker Bay. This will significantly reduce deer habitat below the existing Tongass Forest Plan guideline of 18 deer per square mile to maintain sustainable wolf populations and human deer hunting.

Thoms Creek (VCU 4790) is the most productive salmon stream on Wrangell Island, supporting an important sockeye fishery. Logging old-growth in Thoms Creek makes no sense since it would be off-limits to logging under the proposed Amendment to the Tongass Land Management Plan, which is under review now and slated for implementation later this year.

The Forest Service should instead select the "Small Mill and Wildlife Alternative" submitted by the Wrangell Resource Council and SEACC in 2011. The citizen's alternative proposal wouldn't require new roads and 2 MMBF per year of timber would supply local mills:

- \*Ensuring a consistent, long-term supply of economic timber to small mills in Wrangell from small sales along the existing road system over a 30-year period

- \*Maintaining Wrangell Island's deer population

- \*Integrating wildlife and fish habitat restoration, recreation, and stewardship activities into the project based on the "Good for Services" model

Please start planning for a future that make economical and environmental sense for Wrangell and Southeast Alaska.

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