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Comments: As a normal busy person with a life to lead and a living to make, I was not able to read through the entire 400+ pages of the CTP DEIS. However I have some serious concerns about the CTP DEIS.
What follows is a quote from Sonia Ibbera's comments on the CTP DEIS. I agree with every word and could not have expressed it better myself so please take her word as a direct expression of my opinion.
"My immediate concern, similar to the POW LLA project and the South Revilla project, is with how the agency is conducting this NEPA analysis. Instead of deferring final decisions regarding specific activities for the Central Tongass project until the agency discloses and evaluates the precise timing, size, and location of the proposed activities, including the selection of appropriate design components or mitigation measures, the Forest Supervisor could prematurely adopt a selected alternative. As a result, neither the Forest Service nor the public would be able to adequately analyze the site-specific impacts and alternatives proposed and make a reasoned choice among the alternatives. This is precisely the type of environmentally blind decision-making Congress designed NEPA to avoid. Please provide real opportunities for the public to express their concerns and include specific information of the plan, including proposed locations, timing, etc."
Below are comments from Liz Cabrerra from PEDC. I agree with what she says.
"Small-scale timber operators are a relatively new component of our local economy and a potential area for economic growth and diversification. The USFS has an obligation to supply timber to industry, but has never adequately provided saw-timber for the small mill operators in Petersburg and the surrounding area."
I am concerned about the scale of old growth logging as proposed in Alternative 2. World wide, old growth forests are rapidly disappearing. All other national forests have suspended the practice of old growth logging. It's time to end old growth logging on the Tongass forever.
I do not support creating timber sales with the sole purpose of keeping the one remaining large scale mill in SEAK supplied with logs. The timber industry is no longer a statistically significant contributor to the regional economy. Logging hurts other economic drivers that ARE important to the local economy. Why sacrifice fishing and tourist industry jobs for timber jobs? It just doesn't make sense. The amount of money the U.S. tax payers are asked to pay to subsidize each SEAK timber industry job in unconscionable.
I did not see a single mention in the CTP DEIS of the value of the Tongass as a carbon sink of global significance in the fight against climate change. Maybe I missed it? If not, it seems like any objective, fact based, scientifically produced EIS in this day and age that does not consider the impacts of the proposed activities on climate change is astonishingly remiss. How is it not possible that the Forest Service is not even mentioning this issue in an DEIS? Without addressing climate change and providing an alternative that is specifically targeted to reduce co2 production this DEIS is incomplete.
The Tongass is invaluable wildlife habitat for numerous species. Logging on the Tongass never has and never will result in the long term improvement of wildlife habitat. On an increasingly overcrowded planet, the Tongass shines out as a relatively intact ecosystem of global significance. The best way to realize the value of the Tongass is to keep it intact, preserve it for future generations of all species and allow it to continue sequestering carbon and hatching out salmon fry.
I support alternative 1; no action!