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Organization:

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Comments: I lived in Alaska for about 37 years and during that time worked for Alaska Department of Fish and Game and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Tongass National Forest is part of the largest remaining temperate rainforest in the world. Some of these trees are over 1,000 years old. Removing protection from the remaining roadless area will allow removal of old-growth areas that provide habitat for wildlife that require these areas, including the Prince of Wales Spruce Grouse, the Queen Charlotte Goshawk, and the Marbled Murrelet (listed as endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List). Five species of Pacific salmon rear and spawn in the Tongass, as do brown bears, wolves, and Sitka black-tailed deer. Building roads fragments habitat, which affects breeding success and seasonal migrations of some species. Logging roads cause erosion that load streams with sediment, destroying anadromous and resident fish spawning habitat and suffocating their eggs. Southeast Alaska is inhabited by indigenous people that have been there for thousands of years and that depend upon the Tongass as a source of food and spiritual sustenance. Logging focused on old growth is not sustainable and old growth forests are a valuable natural resource that are not replaceable. The current roadless areas should be maintained.

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