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Comments: The push for an Alaska-specific roadless rule has always been just pretext for continuing to subsidize Southeast Alaska's old-growth timber industry that exports our old-growth forests overseas and provides free roads for mining development.

The landmark 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule protects more than 58 million acres of roadless national forest lands across the country. Weakening this policy in Alaska will harm local and indigenous communities. The Tongass National Forest is a refuge for salmon, birds, and other wildlife and stores more carbon removed from the atmosphere than any other national forest in the country, serving as a buffer against climate change. For all these reasons, hundreds of scientists have supported the inclusion of the Tongass National Forest in the National Roadless Conservation Rule.

The rule continues to receive overwhelming support in Alaska and across the nation. Recent polling shows that 61 percent of voters nationwide oppose exempting large parts of the Tongass from the protections of the Roadless Rule.

[Position]