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First name: Gerald

Last name: Morris

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the proposed alterations to the Alaska Roadless Rule. Only Alternative 1 preserves the Tongass National Forest, a unique and irreplaceable treasure of Alaska. Beyond the obvious implications of the resulting habitat destruction on biodiversity and ecology, the non-obvious economic impacts of destruction of the Tongass are considerable. However, well-intentioned and carefully managed, building roads through the Tongass will disrupt important wildlife migration paths, impact nearby areas, and promote continued encroachment into critical natural areas. The maintenance of multiple diverse areas of the Tongass as untouched preserve is critical to maintaining Alaska's wildlife, including the economically important stock of salmon; it is essential for salmon to have multiple areas available for spawning, and salmon rotate through multiple spawning areas. Destruction or contamination of any of these areas could have devastating impacts on the salmon population, negatively impacting the \$60 million commercial salmon fishing. Salmon fishing in the Tongass employs nearly 10% of the jobs in Southeast Alaska. Commercial fishing, combined with tourism based on sportfishing and ecotourism combine to form an estimated \$986 million economic impact to Alaska.

The short-term economic boost from building roads to support mining is not worth the long-term impacts to one of Alaska's most unique and essential resources.

Thank you

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