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First name: Christina

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I strongly oppose the Forest Service's plan to eliminate "Roadless Rule" protections for the Tongass National Forest and urge you to select the "no action" alternative instead.

I am an ardent birder and I know how important it is for birds that there be some areas of forest that are left without roads. Roads create an edge -- some birds do well with edges, but other birds absolutely need a deep undisturbed wilderness in order to mate successfully. I am certain the Tongass provides this for some species of birds. In the wake of the study finding that we have lost 30% of our birds in the past 50 years, it is clear that we need to leave some portions of the wilderness unmolested.

I know this is true of some animals, as well -- wolverines, for example.

With humans having caused so much damage to this planet, and with so little true wilderness remaining, surely you can understand the necessity of leaving some pieces of wilderness intact and without roads, not to mention logging.

The value of the forest as is far exceeds whatever profit a logging company would make off it.

As you know the Tongass is America's wildest remaining national forest, with more than 9 million acres of roadless areas. And it's home to a wide range of wildlife, including Alexander Archipelago wolves, grizzly bears and salmon. It also stores a vast amount of carbon, with its centuries-old trees serving as a carbon-reserve life raft in this time of climate change. Logging releases most of that carbon into the atmosphere.

Your proposal to open the door to clearcutting and bulldozing is irresponsible and fundamentally threatens these values. The Tongass belongs to all Americans and shouldn't be sacrificed to the timber industry, which provides a small fraction of the jobs and income in Southeast Alaska compared to tourism and fishing - both of which rely on intact forests to thrive. It's even more important to save these last remaining roadless forests because your agency has fragmented and logged so much of our national forests, harming wildlife and waters along the way.

Further, I oppose your plan to allow the agency to open any of the 5 million acres of roadless areas on the Chugach National Forest to bulldozing and clearcutting for logging. This is simply a backdoor repeal of the 2001

Roadless Rule, which protects all roadless lands because of the critical role they play in protecting pure water, secure wildlife habitat and remote recreation.

Please - think of future generations by selecting the "no action" alternative to maintain "Roadless Rule" protections for the Tongass and Chugach.

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