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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Comments to oppose modification to the Roadless Rule

Dear U.S. Forest Service,

For nearly two decades, the federal Roadless Rule has prohibited road-building and logging on nearly 60 million acres of the country's most pristine national forest land. The Roadless Rule currently protects more than half of the nearly 17-million-acre Tongass National Forest in Alaska. Part of the largest remaining temperate rainforest on Earth, the Tongass hosts the Prince of Wales Spruce Grouse and the Queen Charlotte Goshawk, a subspecies of Northern Goshawk that hunts and breeds exclusively in old-growth forests.

The Roadless Rule helps protect old-growth habitat for birds and mammals that live in these unique habitats. Opening roadless areas to more logging and roads will fragment the forest and eliminate more of the big old trees that these animals rely on. Once gone, they are gone forever - we cannot afford to lose precious natural areas like this.

Yet, all of the action alternatives in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement allow more roadbuilding and logging across the Tongass National Forest. Logging roads and timber operations cost tens of millions of taxpayer dollars every year, with zero return on investment. Meanwhile, these destructive activities degrade the naturally sustainable wealth of salmon, wildlife watching, and tourism opportunities. As a taxpayer and environmentalist, I want these places preserved, not destroyed. And I certainly do not want my tax dollars paying for this.

It is time to stop opening more and more acres to the timber industry and instead bolster protections to the old-growth forests and wild areas on the Tongass. I urge you to select the "No Action" Alternative (Alternative 1) and allow the Roadless Rule to remain intact on the Tongass National Forest.

Sincerely,

Arlene Steinberg

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