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Title:

Comments: I have travelled through the Tongass National Forest more than a dozen times and had the good fortune to hike there when able to get ashore by small boat. It is a magical and unique ecosystem that varies by region, island and season. The trees have a dignity, size and majesty that has accumulated over centuries of quiet and tending by a harsh, yet generous, climate. It is sacred not just for humans' experiences of it, but, even more importantly, as the habitat of countless species, microscopic and gigantic. It is not just the land of the Tongass that is spectacular, it is also the waters the Tongass land feeds and the creatures that abound in this waters.

Opening this wonderland to roads would be its death knell. Roads, the logging trucks that would follow, and the devastation of attendant forestry practices that scour the earth and pollute the waters would surely cost the US one of the greatest fishing habitats in the world and the most pristine, healthy fish the planet produces. That's a loss to everyone and to the Nature that sustains us all.

Opening the Tongass to roads -- exempting it from roadless protections -- would be shortsighted and only temporarily feed the greed that motivates this action. We must protect some very special places from such foolish pride and greed. We must act to protect the best of Nature from our worst short-sighted human instincts.

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