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Comments: The Tongass National Forest is the WORLD's largest temperate rainforest, essentially a world treasure. Yet, this new rule change would allow its blatant DESTRUCTION! Although cutting down "a few" trees seems harmless, it will have drastic environmental effects in the Alaskan panhandle and beyond. Logging exposes the the normally shaded soil and exacerbates erosion and loss of topsoil. Treeless areas will allow for more runoff, flash floods, and the carrying of sediments into local rivers and the Pacific Ocean, drastically altering the ecosystems in these regions. Further, America's largest national forest serve as a major carbon sink in the region. Cutting it down paves the way for tons and tons of carbon dioxide to be released into the atmosphere, further exacerbating the climate crisis.

This is not even considering the vast diversity of fauna in the forest, which will suffer with the loss of habitat. This includes five species of Pacific salmon, brown (grizzly) bears, wolves, Sitka black-tailed deer (which only exist in Alaska), Bald Eagles, Northern Goshawks, and Marbled Murrelets. These animals deserve to be protected, not driven to the brink of extinction.

The next generation of American and world citizens has the right to experience this untouched wilderness without human intervention. Fight against this environmental disaster, just for the purpose of a tiny bit of economic growth (Logging makes up only about 1% of the economy of the Alaskan Panhandle).

We must fight for the protection of Tongass National Forest! Do not allow the federal government to destroy this national treasure.

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