

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/25/2019 8:00:00 AM

First name: Neel

Last name: Patel

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello.

I am a physician in Oregon and I strongly urge you to oppose opening of millions of acres in Alaska's Tongass National Forest for mining and logging projects. The current proposal favors the most aggressive approach (Alternative 6). I urge you to go with Alternative 1- keeping the roadless rule intact and continuing our commitment to conservation. The forests is an important carbon sink for the world and is full of invaluable old growth forest. To put some of those 800+ year old trees in perspective, condiser this: there are trees that were alive during Genghis Kahn's time and during the Black Death in Europe. Some of the trees were already 300 years old by the time the Taj Majal was completed.

Those trees deserve to stay standing and the forest deserves to remain intact.

Beyond its natural beauty and cultural importance, the Tongass Forest is one of the world's best climate defenses. The old trees store nearly 10-12 percent of all carbon consumed by America's national forests - and it's Alaska's first defense against the worsening climate crisis. This climate crisis will affect everyone and compound all of our current problems, including human health and disease, which affects all my patients.

These lands must be protected and I urge the agency to take action to block this destructive proposal.

Thank you.

[Position]

[Position]