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Organization:

Title:

Comments: To whom it may concern,

I am writing to urge you to take the "No Action Alternative" and keep the Roadless Rule in effect in the Tongass National Forest. Opening up the area to road construction would be a mistake. This is true because of many things including Native values and fish and animal habitat, but I think that the Tongass also has great potential for globally relevant forest research and opening up the area to road construction would eliminate most - if not all - of this potential.

Currently I study forests in the northern hemisphere. As you may be aware, the Tongass National Forest is one of the largest remaining intact areas of old growth in the world, and has large potential for forest research into, for example, carbon storage, forest growth, and resilience to disturbance and changes in climate. The area represents a very unique opportunity to study the characteristics of a largely undeveloped forest and could set the standard for others to see the potential in keeping forests intact.

I understand that the main argument against the "Roadless Rule" is that it would open up the area to economic development in the form of timber production. As an alternative, I would think that research and tourism would pose larger sustained economic benefits to the area while also contributing to greater scientific knowledge of the importance of forest ecosystems in uncertain climatic conditions.

Thank you for your time.

[Position]