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Last name: Ash

Organization:

Title:

Comments: My name is Pamela Ash and I live in Sitka, Alaska. I first moved to Sitka in 1974 to raise my son in the forest. We moved to Elfin Cove in 1976 for 8 years, then back to Sitka.

I love living in a Rain Forest amongst Old Growth trees. I love hiking and boating and kayaking along the shores. It seems a sin to me to continue to log in such a sacred place. And even more of a sin to log and build roads for such little profit. Please keep Alaska Wild for my children and grandchildren. Do not put a little profit above such splendor. I am writing a comment on the Alaska Roadless Rule DEIS because I am concerned with how the Rule and the proposed full exemption will impact my foraging for wild foods, the peace and solitude I find in nature, the status of the Tongass as a national and global treasure, the conservation of resources for future generations the forest's ability to sequester carbon and mitigate climate change impacts, recreating.

Out of the alternatives described in the AKRR DEIS I support alternative 1: no action. It protects important fish and wildlife habitat from clearcutting and roadbuilding. I depend on roadless areas in the Tongass National Forest for healthy fish habitat, foraging and gathering wild foods, recreating and enjoying nature, deer habitat and subsistence hunting, carbon sequestration and local climate change mitigation, viewing wildlife, keeping public lands wild for future generations, fiscal responsibility and saving taxpayer dollars . A full exemption does not protect these values, nor does it effectively balance economic development and conservation of roadless area characteristics. A full exemption from the Roadless Rule and increased logging and roadbuilding will negatively impact the Tongass and what I and many others use and depend on the forest to provide for us.

The Roadless areas on the Tongass that are especially important to me are those on or around Baranof Island, Chichagof Island, Admiralty Island, the northern mainland above Port Snettisham (around Juneau), all of the inventoried roadless areas on the Tongass Yakutat forelands, Revillagigedo Island (near Ketchikan), Wrangell and Etolin Islands, Prince of Wales Island, Kuiu Island, Kupreanof Island, the central mainland from Hobart Bay to Stikine River, the southern mainland from Bradfield Canal to Dixon Entrance . I want the roadless areas in these locations to stay in roadless status in any alternative selected by the Forest Service, and be managed to provide for the uses and activities I listed above. It is important to me that the T77 and the TNC conservation priority areas retain their roadless protections.

I do not support the Forest Services preferred alternative of a full exemption. A full exemption is not in the interests of Southeast Alaskans who live in and use the Tongass National Forest, because If you divide the voices wanting to be heard into two groups you will hear the one side who loudly proclaim JOBS. GROWTH MONEY

On the other side youll hear BEAUTY SACRED SPACES. PROTECT SALMON STREAMS. PROTECT THE RAIN FOREST FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS AND FOR THE ANIMALS WHO LIVE THERE. The State of Alaska says that a full exemption is needed for rural economic development opportunities. However, a full exemption would not help create more rural economic development opportunities, it would instead harm our existing rural economies that are based on the visitor industry and commercial fishing industry.

It would further harm rural economic opportunities because pursuing the same outdated economic model of old growth clearcut harvesting for export stifles innovation and possibility in other sectors, such as mariculture, sustainable young growth harvest, and rural agriculture. If the Forest Service wants to support rural economic development, they should devote resources to support our fishing and visitor industries transition to second growth logging invest in creating and maintaining recreation infrastructure improve and streamline existing permitting processes for important community projects rather than rehashing old conflicts.

I urge the Forest Service to prioritize the voices of Southeast Alaskans over those of our political representation and corporate interests. Choosing a full exemption will not create a long lasting, durable solution for roadless areas on the Tongass. It will only increase the legal challenges, uncertainty for businesses, and conflict on the Tongass going forward.

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