Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/17/2019 9:00:00 AM
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Organization:
Title:
Comments: My name is Victoria Curran and I live in Sitka, Alaska. I moved to Sitka in 1982 to work as a marine biologist/diver and have lived here ever since. My two daughters were born and raised here and returned to live here several years after college. My grand daughter was born here last year. My husband is a commercial fishermen fishing for salmon, halibut, and black cod. For nearly 4 decades my family has depended on the Tongass for food (venison, berries, salmon, beach asparagus to name a few), recreation (camping and hiking), and serenity. It is also critical to a healthy ocean, which we also depend upon. 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 families dependence on the Tongass but also, critically, Ithe status of the Tongass as a national and global treasure, the forest's ability to sequester carbon and mitigate climate change impacts, and the conservation of resources for future generations .

Out of the alternatives described in the AKRR DEIS I support alternative 1: no action. The rule is working fine as it is by balancing the conservation of our fish and wildlife habitat with important development projects. I depend on roadless areas in the Tongass National Forest for economic livelihood, healthy fish habitat, deer habitat and subsistence hunting, foraging and gathering wild foods, recreating and enjoying nature, carbon sequestration and local climate change mitigation, viewing wildlife, and keeping public lands wild for future generations. The no action alternative is also the most fiscally responsible and saves 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, Yakutat forelands. I want the roadless areas in these locations and throughout Southeast Alaska 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. The people of Southeast and Alaska have spoken overwhelmingly in favor of maintaining the roadless rule. WE are the people that make our living here, live here, and known the forest and our environment. Fisheries and Tourism (including cultural Tourism) are the big economic drivers here now and opening up the Tongass for more roadbuilding and timber harvest will harm our economy. The economics of logging do not make sense for our region, our state, or our nation.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 invest in creating and maintaining recreation infrastructure transition to second growth logging 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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