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Comments: Tongass National Forest Roadless Areas Threatened

In 2001, protection for roadless areas in national forests was passed in the form of the "Roadless Rule." However, I now learn that two Alaskan politicians - Senator Lisa Murkowski and Governor Mike Dunleavy - think that their opinions matter more than the millions of Americans who favor protections for roadless areas of the Tongass.

With twelve years left to avoid catastrophic climate change, we need to use our national forests as carbon sinks, not carbon factories! Logging the roadless areas of our largest national forest is utter folly.

The plants and animals that roadless areas shelter will increasingly come under threat of outright extinction if climate change is allowed to continue at the current rate. The Tongass may become a critical wildlife corridor and haven for animals pushed out of habitat that is no longer suitable to the south. We must not allow the short-term money to be made by the logging and other extractive industries to ruin this forest at the expense of everyone else.

Here in Virginia, I am protecting a small forest as a haven for threatened species. I do this at my own expense. I fully, 100%, cheerfully support efforts to keep the Tongass roadless areas protected.

Please do not allow short-sighted politicians who receive contributions from big industries to diminish the trust the American public has in the US Forest Service employees. Protect the Tongass - for all Americans, for the forest, and for yourselves and your family.

Thank you.

Susan McSwain

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