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First name: Mary

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Concern about the Tongass National Forest

Dear U.S. Forest Service,

I am writing to oppose the Forest Service's plan to eliminate "Roadless Rule" protections for the Tongass National Forest and urge you to select the "no action" alternative instead.

Wild public forest have been a haven to me and my family for years. With the increasing loss of birds and other wildlife these roadless areas are the last stand for our natural heritage. It also stores a vast amount of carbon, with its centuries-old trees serving as a carbon-reserve life raft in this time of climate change. Logging releases most of that carbon into the atmosphere.

Your proposal to open the door to clearcutting and bulldozing fundamentally threatens these values. The Tongass belongs to all Americans and shouldn't be sacrificed to the timber industry, which provides a small fraction of the jobs and income in Southeast Alaska compared to tourism and fishing - both of which rely on intact forests to thrive. It's even more important to save these last remaining roadless forests because they have become fragmented and logged so much of our national forests, harming wildlife and waters along the way.

Further, I oppose your plan to allow the agency to open any of the 5 million acres of roadless areas on the Chugach National Forest to bulldozing and clearcutting for logging. This is simply a backdoor repeal of the 2001 Roadless Rule, which protects all roadless lands because of the critical role they play in protecting pure water, secure wildlife habitat and remote recreation.

Please - think of future generations by selecting the "no action" alternative to maintain "Roadless Rule" protections for the Tongass and Chugach.

Sincerely,

Mary Kay Rothert

Bloomington, IN 47408