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Organization:

Title:

Comments: We need the Tongass National Forest for a carbon sink

Dear U.S. Forest Service,

I strongly 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.

My assumption is that the Trump Administration and its many political appointees don't actually care about any position that isn't anti-Obama, anti-environment, anti-corruption, anti-profiteering, and anti-regulation-unless those positions can somehow benefit the already rich and the powerful.

Nevertheless, I am writing to you to share my opposition to the proposed development of the Tongass. With accelerating climate change and worsening repercussions from it, more than ever we need these wild forests to mitigate atmospheric carbon buildups, and to provide safe habitat for species that are or will more likely become threatened or endangered.

As you know the Tongass is America's wildest remaining national forest, with more than 9 million acres of roadless areas. And it's home to a wide range of wildlife, including Alexander Archipelago wolves, grizzly bears and salmon. 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 is irresponsible and 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 your agency has 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,

Christian Clough

Chicago, IL

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