

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/19/2019 9:00:00 AM

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Comments: 9:50 AM

November 19, 2019

My name is Nathan Alton of the Royal Oak High School. I am currently studying the history of US public lands in a history class, History of US Public Lands. In the time during this course I have found that the protection of natural areas is incredibly important. There are numerous landmarks, cultural sites, and natural wonders that would be lost if not for the protection provided under labels such as National Park. The first national park, Yellowstone, would have lost its beautiful and jaw-dropping geysers to land development if not for the creation of the very idea. There are currently 419 national parks in the United States, with wonderful national forests, monuments, memorials, and more. These areas are preserved not only for the natural world to flourish, but for the people of the United States to enjoy as well.

That being said, the removal of the Roadless Rule from the Tongass National Forest would also be applicable, if seemingly in contradiction with the idea of public lands. It has been shown with the Alaskan Department of Natural Resources' letter to the USDA that the Tongass is already protected by laws such as the Tongass Timber Reform Act. The economic restrictions brought on by the Roadless Rule only add to the economic depression of the surrounding area, adding little benefit to the people of Alaska as well.

The Tongass should not be overrun, however. A major loss of such diverse wildlife would be a disaster for local ecosystems and the natural world. However, regulated use is manageable for the area, considering the already established laws doing such.

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