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First name: Dean

Last name: Carr

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am inalterably opposed to any relaxation of the current designation of the Tongass National Forest that would allow the building of ANY logging roads into the Tongass or that would allow any commercial logging in the area as well. Such action would clearly benefit only the logging industry, and result, in relative terms, in short-term gains for a commercial interest, and to the long-term damage to an otherwise resilient, beautiful, but vulnerable landscape that deserves to be protected for the good of the planet and all its inhabitants in perpetuity.

This area makes a significant contribution to buffering the ever-worsening effects of climate change, much of which is directly related to extraction industries, and further aggravated by pollution and civilization's use of oil, natural gas, and the leveling of natural areas for plantations and agricultural use.

The timber industries need to refocus their efforts on regenerative forestry in areas that have already been logged, and done so in a way that supports environmental diversity and protection as well as meeting the needs of human population. No longer should they be allowed to harvest old growth forest or build roads into roadless areas that open those areas to environmental degradation to the invasion of non-native plants, or to damage from human use (litter and damaging recreational use).

Political pressures from state and federal levels, and from the timber industry should be resisted. They do not serve environmental imperatives, nor represent good application of scientific studies. Any changes in current protections should be met with prompt legal action to forestall any damage until a future administration will undoubtedly lead to policy reversal that is more ecologically sound. Save time, money, and needless aggravation now.

It is time to do the correct thing now and continue to protect the Tongass!

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