

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

First name: Riley

Last name: Wilson

Organization:

Title:

Comments: The US Department of Agriculture should choose alternative 1 in response to the question of the magnitude of protection of the Tongass National Forest. Although the economic development of Alaska is important, it should not be prioritized over the protection of such valuable natural resources. The state of Alaska should work to find other ways to reach economic development before exempting the Tongass National Forest from the Roadless Rule.

The Tongass National Forest is important to protect both because of its features and size. The forest is the largest national forest in America and is home to nearly 17 million acres of trees and wildlife. Not only are the trees an important factor in fighting climate change with the amount of oxygen they produce, but national forests such as the Tongass provide drinking water for as many as 180 million Americans annually.

The Tongass National Forest is also its own source of employment and economic prosperity through the growing business of tourism. Tourism brings in roughly 2.2 billion dollars a year in Alaska, a large chunk of which coming from the Tongass. Although this may not completely offset the profit difference compared to if the Tongass was used as suitable timber land, it's still a sizeable enough benefit to justify preserving the Tongass for generations to come.

[Position]

[Position]