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Organization:
Title:
Comments: My name is Deirdre Creed and I live in Salt Lake City, Utah but grew up in Kotzebue and Sitka. I started going to Sitka for the Fine Arts Camp when I was 13. Later, I went to Mt. Edgecumbe High School. After graduating high school, I spent 3 summers commercial and charter fishing out of Sitka. In the forests of Sitka I have run cross country races, hiked mountains, went hunting and fishing, and much more. When clients from my fishing boat visited Sitka, many of them would comment on how the air smelled so fresh. That was the Sitka spruce they were smelling.

I love Southeast Alaska. Ive been to just about every town from Hoonah to Ketchikan to Haines to Juneau. I love each of them, and they are all shaped by the wilderness around them. I am writing a comment on the Alaska Roadless Rule DEIS because I am concerned with how the Rule and the proposed full exemption will impact my fishing, hunting, foraging for wild foods, the peace and solitude I find in nature, recreating, the status of the Tongass as a national and global treasure, the forest's ability to sequester carbon and mitigate climate change impacts, the conservation of resources for future generations .

Out of the alternatives described in the AKRR DEIS I support alternative 1: no action. The rule is working fine as it is by balancing the conservation of our fish and wildlife habitat with important development projects.. I depend on roadless areas in the Tongass National Forest for healthy fish habitat, economic livelihood, foraging and gathering wild foods, recreating and enjoying nature, carbon sequestration and local climate change mitigation, viewing wildlife, keeping public lands wild for future generations, fiscal responsibility and saving taxpayer dollars deer habitat and subsistence hunting. A full exemption does not protect these values, nor does it effectively balance economic development and conservation of roadless area characteristics. A full exemption from the Roadless Rule and increased logging and roadbuilding will negatively impact the Tongass and what I and many others use and depend on the forest to provide for us.

The Roadless areas on the Tongass that are especially important to me are those on or around Baranof Island, Yakutat forelands, Prince of Wales Island, Wrangell and Etolin Islands, all of the inventoried roadless areas on the Tongass Kupreanof Island, Kuiu Island, the southern mainland from Bradfield Canal to Dixon Entrance the central mainland from Hobart Bay to Stikine River, the northern mainland above Port Snettisham (around Juneau), Admiralty Island, Chichagof Island. I want the roadless areas in these locations to stay in roadless status in any alternative selected by the Forest Service, and be managed to provide for the uses and activities I listed above. It is important to me that the T77 and the TNC conservation priority areas retain their roadless protections.

I do not support the Forest Services preferred alternative of a full exemption. A full exemption is not in the interests of Southeast Alaskans who live in and use the Tongass National Forest, because It will harm existing economic drivers and doesnt account for the many people who have spoke out about a no action alternative. Those who are not in support for this initiative shouldnt have to bare the burden / tax it will take to not only create but maintain these roads and clear cutting.. The State of Alaska says that a full exemption is needed for rural

economic development opportunities. However, a full exemption would not help create more rural economic development opportunities, it would instead harm our existing rural economies that are based on the visitor industry and commercial fishing industry.

It would further harm rural economic opportunities because pursuing the same outdated economic model of old growth clearcut harvesting for export stifles innovation and possibility in other sectors, such as mariculture, sustainable young growth harvest, and rural agriculture. If the Forest Service wants to support rural economic development, they should devote resources to support our fishing and visitor industries transition to second growth logging invest in creating and maintaining recreation infrastructure improve and streamline existing permitting processes for important community projects rather than rehashing old conflicts.

I urge the Forest Service to prioritize the voices of Southeast Alaskans over those of our political representation and corporate interests. Choosing a full exemption will not create a long lasting, durable solution for roadless areas on the Tongass. It will only increase the legal challenges, uncertainty for businesses, and conflict on the Tongass going forward.

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