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Title: President

Comments: I am Philip Fenner, President of the North Cascades Conservation Council (NCCC). NCCC was founded in 1957 to protect and preserve the scenic, scientific, recreational, educational, and wilderness values of the North Cascades. We are strong supporters of the 2001 Roadless Rule and are concerned with maintaining its integrity nationwide. We view the Tongass Roadless DEIS as a threat to this integrity and thus a looming threat to our own extensive roadless areas in the North Cascades, which has the greatest extent of otherwise unprotected roadless areas in the contiguous 48 States.

I have researched the Purpose and Need in the Tongass DEIS. After twelve pages of obfuscation and circumlocution I conclude that the implicit Purpose is to cut the trees in the Tongass National Forest and the Need is to build roads for access to those trees and haul the logs away. While the DEIS contains many disingenuous reassurances of that there will be little or no impact from logging and road building, 18 issues that would evaluate those impacts are eliminated from detailed study!

Removing 9.2 million acres of Tongass National Forest from the protection of the national Roadless Rule and depending upon the state of Alaska to safeguard the values inherent in untrammled roadless forests is the equivalent of asking the fox to guard the chicken coop. You can only expect to have feathers, or in this case stumps, left.

NCCC strongly supports the No Action Alternative, thus maintaining the national Roadless Rule in the Tongass.

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