Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/9/2019 9:00:00 AM
First name: Michael
Last name: Shurgot
Organization:
Title:
Comments: My name is Michael Shurgot and I live in Seattle, Washington.

I worked on the Roadless Rule with the Mountaineers in Seattle and have hiked in Alaska. I know what is at stake, and that clear-cutting in the Tongass is a crime against the only planet we have. Stop this!

I am writing to express strong opposition to efforts to roll back the Roadless Area Conservation Rule (Roadless Rule) in Alaska or elsewhere. The Roadless Rule was implemented with unprecedented public support to protect some of our nations most pristine public lands, including large parts of the Tongass National Forest. You must choose the No Action alternative. Any other choice would ignore overwhelming public support and harm Alaskans, including Alaska Natives, and taxpayers across the nation.

In Southeast Alaska, tourism accounts for 28% of employment and generate an annual $1 billion in economic benefit, making it far more of an economic driver than the timber industry, which is less than 1% of the regional economy.

Any choice but the No Action alternative would also put wildlife and critical habitat at risk, threaten access to clean water, and be a step in the wrong direction on climate change jeopardizing Alaskans at a time when the state already faces severe challenges related to rising temperatures. I urge you not to abandon the Roadless Rule in Alaska and instead to put the public interest above corporate profits by choosing to keep the rule in place unchanged.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Regards, Michael Shurgot

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