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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Please maintain protections for the Tongass and Chugach National Forests

Dear Secretary Sonny Perdue,

The Roadless Rule and NO logging (clearcut or otherwise) must be maintained for the Tongass National Forest in Alaska. Let us make no mistake that the intent of ending the Roadless Rule is deliberately planned to clear the way for clearcutting the ancient trees in the Tongass, and other resource extraction activities. Not specifying where the timber harvest is to take place nor the amount of trees over the surface area of the land that is to be harvested is irresponsible, and would devastate the ecosystem.

First point: I would like to express my anger at the proposition of opening up the Tongass for resource extraction due to the complete DISREGARD for the communities that rely on the Tongass for their economic stability.

Second point: I would like to express my anger for NOT including a COMPLETE LIST of COSTS to the American people and the Alaskan taxpayers when: 1) road construction is to take place for the private timber companies to use; 2) sedimentation of the streams and tributaries become choked with sediment runoff; 3) regular maintenance and upgrade to the road system; 4) fish hatcheries that will need to be established due to the burying of the gravel beds that will prevent the wild fish stock from laying their eggs; 5) the smothering of fish eggs preventing oxygen to diffuse across the membranes; 6) landslides cover the roads and streams; 7) environmental monitoring activities of the streams, and forests will be required; and, 8) restoration activities will take place.

Third point: I would like to express my anger for hiding the fact that whenever land is clearcut, the cleared land is now ready to receive invasive species. Invasive species generate biomass at an increased rate faster than the native vegetation, literally choking out the native vegetation putting at risk the native wildlife due to limited food resources. Invasive species also increase the potential of wildfires from the greater fuel supply. The fires in California should be a warning of the danger that will come to the Tongass.

Fourth point: I would like to express my anger at ignoring the fact that clearcutting activities change the underground water storage capacity. Less water in the soil profile means the trees will not be able to have access to as much water as is necessary for the trees to stay healthy. Less water in the trees means the bark beetle invasions will occur or some other parasite that is deadly to the trees will occur. I will cite the bark beetle infestations of the Southern California forests when conditions became too dry for the trees to resist bark beetle infestations.

Fifth point: I would like to express my anger at ignoring the devastating effect that clearcutting has on the streams and rivers because the trees supply the water to the streams and rivers. The root systems of the trees behave as a water control mechanism. In many areas around the world that have been clearcut there are no more streams. In Alaska, no streams means no fish.

Sixth point: Clearcutting the Tongass will add carbon dioxide to the atmosphere due to the reduction of the trees that are not available to use carbon dioxide for photosynthesis. A healthy tree has the ability to remove an estimated 1 ton of carbon dioxide in its lifetime. By removing the trees, greater carbon dioxide will be in the atmosphere, resulting in an increased rate of warming the planet. Leading to the Seventh point, which is the same as the First point.

I urge you to maintain protections for our national forests in Alaska.

The Tongass produces on average 28% of Alaska's annual commercial salmon catch and 25% of the entire west coast annual harvest! The Forest Service estimates that the salmon industry generates \$986 million annually.

Please stop the rollback of the important 2001 National Roadless Rule in Alaska and protect our national forests!

Sincerely,

Catherine Buchanan

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