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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Comments to oppose modification to the Roadless Rule

Dear U.S. Forest Service,

As a retired biologist I enjoy wild areas even if I do not get to visit them. As a result I support lands that are set away for just natural reasons, such as Roadless Rule Areas in our national lands. Such an area exists in the Tongass National Forest in Alaska. The Roadless Rule helps protect old-growth habitat for both birds (such as the Prince of Wales Spruce Grouse and Northern Goshawk), and mammals (such as wolves and deer). Opening Roadless Rules Areas to more logging and roads will only fragment the forest. It will also eliminate more of the big old trees that these animals rely on. Furthermore, intact, ancient forests are strongholds of climate resilience. As you know, the Tongass Forest is one of world's largest ancient forests.

Yet, in spite of that knowledge, ALL of the action alternatives in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement allow more road building and logging across the Tongass National Forest. Logging roads and timber operations cost tens of millions dollars, taxpayer dollars, every year, yet have zero return on the investment. Meanwhile, these destructive activities degrade the naturally sustainable wealth of salmon, wildlife watching, and tourism opportunities.

Obviously, it is time to stop opening more and more acres to the timber industry. Instead, I suggest we bolster protections to the old-growth forests and wild areas on the Tongass. Therefore, I ask you to select the "No Action" Alternative (Alternative 1) and allow the Roadless Rule to remain intact on the Tongass National Forest.

I hope you act accordingly.

Sincerely,

Joyce Harrington

[Position]