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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Keep 'Roadless Rule' Protections for the Tongass National Forest

Dear U.S. Forest Service,

I strongly oppose the Forest Service's plan to eliminate "Roadless Rule" protections for the Tongass National Forest and urge you to select the "no action" alternative instead.

As you know, the Tongass is America's wildest remaining national forest, with more than 9 million acres of roadless areas, and it is home to a wide range of wildlife, including Alexander Archipelago wolves, grizzly bears, and salmon. It also stores a vast amount of carbon, with its centuries-old trees serving as a carbon-reserve life raft that is desperately needed in the face of the climate crisis. Logging releases most of that carbon into the atmosphere and exacerbates the crisis.

Your proposal to open the door to clearcutting and bulldozing is irresponsible and a fundamental threat to these values. The Tongass belongs to all Americans and should not be sacrificed to the timber industry, which provides a small fraction of the jobs and income in Southeast Alaska compared with tourism and fishing, both of which rely on intact forests to thrive. And because your agency has fragmented and logged so much of our national forests, harming wildlife, and waters along the way, it is now even more important to save these last remaining roadless forests.

Further, I oppose your plan to allow the agency to open any of the 5 million acres of roadless areas on the Chugach National Forest to bulldozing and clearcutting for logging. This is simply a backdoor repeal of the 2001 Roadless Rule, which protects all roadless lands because of the critical role they play in protecting pure water, secure wildlife habitat, and remote recreation.

The only acceptable choice is the "no action" alternative, maintaining "Roadless Rule" protections for the Tongass and Chugach.

Sincerely,

Brian M. Scott

[Position]