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First name: WP

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Organization:

Title:

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

Dear U.S. Forest Service,

My family and I (four voting adults) strongly oppose the Forest Service's plan to eliminate "Roadless Rule" protections for the Tongass National Forest. We urge you to select the "no action" alternative to help protect this special forest habitat instead.

We know the Tongass is America's wildest remaining national forest, with its more than 9 million acres of roadless land. It is home to a wide range of wildlife and keystone species, including Alexander Archipelago wolves, grizzly bears and wild salmon. This forest also stores a vast amount of carbon, with its centuries-old trees serving as an important carbon-reserve in this time of accelerating climate change. We know that logging releases most of that carbon into the atmosphere.

We think your proposal to open the forest to clear cutting and bulldozing is irresponsible and fundamentally threatens critical biotic needs of the Earth. Also the Tongass belongs to all American people; it should not be sacrificed for timber industry profits and operations which only provide a small fraction of jobs and income in Southeast Alaska compared to tourism and fishing. These solid economic drivers both rely on intact forests to survive and thrive.

We know this forest is even more important to save because it is one of the last remaining roadless forests. Your agency's management has fragmented and logged so much of our national forests, that environmental and habitat degradation has significantly harmed healthy wildlife populations and many streams and rivers too.

We also strongly oppose your agency's plan to open any of the 5 million acres of roadless areas in the Chugach National Forest for bulldozing and clear cut logging. It is a backdoor repeal of the 2001 Roadless Rule, which protects all roadless lands because of their critical role in protecting pure water, secure wildlife habitat, especially salmon, and remote recreation.

We ask you to consider not only the health of these special lands and waters, but of our entire planet and its future generations by selecting the "no action" alternative to maintain "Roadless Rule" protections for the Tongass and Chugach.

Sincerely,

WP Lyssie Burden

Port Townsend, WA 98368

[Position]