

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/1/2019 8:00:00 AM

First name: Anon

Last name: Anon

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I want to keep the Roadless Rule in the Tongass

I urge you to select the "No Action" alternative on the Alaska-specific Roadless Rule instead of the sweeping changes the administration is promoting that would completely remove the Tongass National Forest from roadless protections.

The Tongass National Forest contains some of the last large tracts of old growth forest in the country. As an ecologist, I can attest to the fact that keeping old growth forests intact is critical for protecting biodiversity. Old growth forests support unique ecosystems with the highest biodiversity of any forest system. Once they are harvested, it takes hundreds of years to return to old growth conditions again. They are also tremendously important as carbon storage systems. Scientists agree that stopping the harvest of old-growth forests can make a significant contribution to maintaining carbon stores of forests (see Ecological Forest Management, 2018). Preserving the integrity old growth forests by maintaining the Roadless Rule in the Tongass is thus critical to preventing the release of more greenhouse gasses and is necessary in the fight against climate change.

I strongly urge the Forest Service to select Alternative 1, the "no-action" alternative.

Thank you,

David Weber

[Position]