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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Comments to oppose modification to the Roadless Rule

Dear U.S. Forest Service,

For many years I have appreciated the work of the US Forest Service in maintaining old growth forests and in providing recreational access to these irreplaceable American woods. I recently hiked in the Tongass National Forest and I write to oppose the proposed changes in protective rules governing the Tongass.

Opening roadless areas to more logging and roads will fragment the forest and degrade the quality of the entire protected area. Intact, ancient forests are strongholds of climate resilience, and the Tongass is one of world's largest. It must be protected. As a member of the Audubon Society I am deeply worried about the impact these changes will inevitably bring about. The Roadless Rule protects old-growth habitat for birds like the Prince of Wales Spruce Grouse and Northern Goshawk, as well as for mammals like wolves and deer.

All of the alternatives in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement allow more road-building and logging throughout the Tongass National Forest. Logging roads and timber operations cost tens of millions of taxpayer dollars every year, with zero return on investment. Meanwhile, these destructive activities degrade the naturally sustainable wealth of salmon, wildlife watching, and tourism opportunities. This is not a good trade-off and it will risk the destruction of an irreplaceable national resource.

I urge you to select the [ldquo]No Action[rdquo] Alternative (Alternative 1) and allow the Roadless Rule to remain intact protecting the Tongass National Forest.

Sincerely,

Malcolm Richardson

[Position]