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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Comments to oppose modification to the Roadless Rule

Dear U.S. Forest Service,

When I worked to help pass the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, we all knew the Tongass NF was special. Its millions of acres of roadless forest, mountains, fjords, meadows, rivers and wetlands support many species now gone from the lower 48. The Roadless Rule maintains those roadless areas and helps protect old-growth habitat for birds like the Prince of Wales Spruce Grouse and Northern Goshawk, as well as for mammals like grizzly bears, wolves and deer. Opening roadless areas to more logging and roads will fragment the forest, contribute to erosion and sedimentation of streams, damage fish habitat, and eliminate more of the big old trees that these animals rely on. Furthermore, intact, ancient forests are strongholds of climate resilience, and the Tongass is one of world's largest.

Yet, all of the action alternatives in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement allow more roadbuilding and logging across the Tongass National Forest and are all, I believe, contrary to the Forest Service's mission of managing to sustain our natural resources. In addition, 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 which can contribute so much to local economies.

We need to stop opening more and more acres to the timber industry and instead bolster protections to the old-growth forests and wild areas on the Tongass. I urge you to select the "No Action" Alternative (Alternative 1), refrain from fragmenting wildlife habitat, and allow the Roadless Rule to remain intact on the Tongass National Forest.

Sincerely,

Polly Reetz

[Position]