Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/26/2019 9:00:00 AM
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Organization:
Title:
Comments: HC79

Dear Secretary Perdue, Chief Christensen, Regional Forester David Schmid, and whom it may concern,

As an Alaskan who cares about my home and community, I urge you to please select the "no-action" alternative on the Alaska-specific Roadless Rule and protect all inventoried roadless areas of the Tongass National Forest under the 2001 National Roadless Rule.

The Tongass contains some of the last remaining intact old-growth temperate rainforests in the world, and its value in providing endless recreation opportunities, clean water, and fish and wildlife habitat is essential to the economic, cultural, and ecological health of Southeast Alaska. Here, we depend on the fish, the trees, other wildlife, and our shared environment in general to sustain our very lives. We cannot exchange the quality of life for temporary money, even if that were profitable to do. I urge you to keep the 2001 National Roadless Rule intact and to keep current protections in place for the Tongass National Forest.

The Roadless Rule is among the smartest and most popular land management policies the Federal Government has ever adopted. Not only does it preserve that pristine habitat, but it also saves untold millions of taxpayer dollars that might otherwise be wasted to subsidize money-losing timber sales. The value of the Roadless Rule in preventing environmentally damaging and economically wasteful road-building and logging is particularly relevant in the Tongass, where logging costs vastly exceed timber revenues and require unsustainable taxpayer subsidies. Wasting my tax money to subsidize sales that lose money and destroy my environment is a crime that is simply not tolerable.

Lastly, the 2001 National Roadless Rule is well designed and flexible enough to allow for access and development projects. Since 2009 48 projects have been approved in the Tongass, the majority relating to surface exploration of potential mining and hydropower. The USFS has also taken steps to expedite this approval process, now taking only one to three weeks for the Tongass National Forest.

For these reasons, again. I strongly urge you to select the "no-action" alternative on the Alaska-specific Roadless Rule and keep the 2001 National Roadless Rule on the Tongass. You Department's letterhead paper includes the tagline, "Caring for the Land and Serving People". Please act in accordance with that mission statement by preventing the wasteful destruction of my forest and my tax money.

Thank you for protecting the environment that sustains my life and community,

William Arnold

Juneau AK 99802-2730

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