

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/23/2019 9:00:00 AM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: My name is Candace Keyes and while I currently live in Boring Oregon, I grew up in Ketchikan, Alaska where my father was Plant Engineer for Ketchikan Pulp. I grew up opposing clear cutting, and single species reforestation, both of which have devastated our forests nation-wide, destroying wildlife habitat, created eyesores, and leaving them more susceptible to disease and fire damage. I also grew up believing that the owners of mills, such as Ketchikan Pulp, which manufactured a special pulp that was made into food grade cellulose after it was shipped to Japan, had a responsibility to take advantage of technology changes as they became available, improving effluents, stack emissions and efficiencies of operation, but instead of installing secondary waste treatment and cleaning up stack emissions which had destroyed hundreds of acres in Ward Cove, they shut the mill down, which hurt the local economy for awhile, but helped the environment.

I am writing to express strong opposition to efforts to roll back the Roadless Area Conservation Rule (Roadless Rule) in Alaska or elsewhere. The Roadless Rule was implemented with unprecedented public support to protect some of our nations most pristine public lands, including large parts of the Tongass National Forest. You must choose the No Action alternative. Any other choice would ignore overwhelming public support and harm Alaskans, including Alaska Natives, and taxpayers across the nation.

In Southeast Alaska, tourism accounts for 28% of employment and generate an annual \$1 billion in economic benefit, making it far more of an economic driver than the timber industry, which is less than 1% of the regional economy.

Any choice but the No Action alternative would also put wildlife and critical habitat at risk, threaten access to clean water, and be a step in the wrong direction on climate change jeopardizing Alaskans at a time when the state already faces severe challenges related to rising temperatures. I urge you not to abandon the Roadless Rule in Alaska and instead to put the public interest above corporate profits by choosing to keep the rule in place unchanged.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Regards, Candace Keyes

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