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First name: Erik

Last name: Alm

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Keep 'Roadless Rule' Protections for the Tongass National Forest

Dear Chief Vicki Christiansen,

I am writing you today to express my opposition to the Forest Service's plan to eliminate "Roadless Rule" protections for the Tongass National Forest. The only action I support is the "no action" alternative.

The Tongass is America's wildest and most intact national forest, with more than 9 million acres of roadless areas. It is home to lots of wildlife, including a rare species of wolf, black and grizzly bears, salmon, Sitka black-tailed deer and many others. In its centuries old trees, other vegetation and soil it stores vast amounts of carbon. Harvesting timber from this region would release the majority of this carbon into the atmosphere.

I am appalled when considering the effects of your proposal to allow clearcuts and the bulldozing of these ecologically irreplaceable lands. It is irresponsible and unnecessary. The Tongass forests belong to all of us and they shouldn't be sacrificed to the timber industry, which provides a small fraction of the jobs and income in Southeast Alaska. When compared to the superior value of tourism and fishing, which rely on intact forests to thrive, the gift to the destructive logging industry is even more outrageous.

It is critical to protect these last remaining roadless ecosystems especially since the agency under your leadership has already fragmented and logged far too much of our national forests.

Additionally, I vehemently oppose your plan to allow the agency to open any of the 5 million acres of roadless areas in the Chugach National Forest to road building and clear cutting for logging. Your plan is a transparent attempt to repeal the 2001 Roadless Rule. This important measure protects all roadless lands due to the critical role they play in protecting clean water, securing viable homes for wildlife and providing opportunities for solitude and recreation.

I respectfully urge you in the strongest terms to consider our children's future and to come to the conclusion that the "no action" alternative that maintains the "Roadless Rule" protections for the Tongass and Chugach forests.

Sincerely,

Erik Alm

Bellingham, WA 98226

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