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Organization:

Title:

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

Dear Chief Vicki Christiansen,

MY FAMILY AND I STRONGLY OPPOSE THE "FOREST SERVICE" 'S PLAN TO ELIMINATE "ROADLESS RULE" PROTECTIONS FOR THE "TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST" AND, IMPLORE YOU TO SELECT THE "NO ACTION" ALTERNATIVE INSTEAD!

As you know, the "Tongass" is America's wildest remaining national forest, with more than 9 million acres of roadless areas! And, it is home to a wide range of wildlife, including Alexander Archipelago wolves, grizzly bears, and, salmon! It also stores a vast amount of carbon, with its centuries-old trees serving as a carbon-reserve life raft in this time of climate change! Logging releases most of that carbon into the atmosphere!

Your proposal to open the door to clear cutting, and, bulldozing, is irresponsible, and, fundamentally, threatens these values! The "Tongass" belongs to all Americans, and, should not be sacrificed to the timber industry, which provides a small fraction of the jobs, and, income, in Southeast Alaska, compared to tourism, and, fishing - both of which rely on intact forests to thrive! It is even more important to save these last remaining roadless forests because your agency has fragmented, and, logged, so much of our national forests, harming wildlife, and, waters along the way!

The Trump administration continues its assault on our public lands! Recently the "Forest Service" issued a proposal to open more than 9 million pristine acres of Alaska's "Tongass National Forest" to clear cut logging, and, bulldozing, of roads! This would endanger one of the largest, intact, old-growth, temperate, rain forests left in North America! And, crucially, it would set a disastrous precedent for other national forests by rolling back protections that explicitly bar destructive roads!

Our family wants to help defend these national treasures! WE ARE TELLING TRUMP'S "FOREST SERVICE" TO CHOOSE THE "NO ACTION" ALTERNATIVE, AND, UPHOLD SAFEGUARDS FOR THE "TONGASS"!

The new proposal would eliminate protections the "Tongass" now enjoys under what is known as the "Roadless Rule"! For nearly two decades, that rule has protected much of our country's last wild national forests from most logging, and, development! At almost 17 million acres, the "Tongass" is the largest U.S. national forest - and, one of the world's most important temperate rain forests! On the "Tongass", alone, the "rule" protects 9.3 million acres of breathtaking, undeveloped, forests!

This attack also threatens habitat for grizzly, and, black bears, rare Alexander Archipelago wolves, and, wild salmon! And, it would be a major blow to one of our greatest defenses against climate change: the forest's centuries-old trees that store huge amounts of carbon!

And, adding insult to injury, at the last minute, Trump snuck in a poison pill that would open the door to bulldozers, and, chainsaws, on 5.3 million more acres of roadless lands on the neighboring "Chugach National Forest" - a spectacular landscape of rugged mountains, snow-covered peaks, lakes, rivers, and, streams!

OUR FAMILY IS STANDING UP FOR MILLIONS OF ACRES OF ONE OF OUR WILDEST PLACES! WE ARE TELLING THE FEDS TO KEEP THE "ROADLESS RULE"'S PROTECTIONS FOR ALASKA'S

"TONGASS RAINFOREST!"

Further, our family opposes your plan to allow the agency to open any of the 5 million acres of roadless areas on the "Chugach National Forest" to bulldozing, and, clear cutting, for logging! This is simply a backdoor repeal of the "2001 Roadless Rule", which protects all roadless lands because of the critical role they play in protecting pure water, securing wildlife habitat, and, remote recreation!

Please - think of future generations by selecting the "no action" alternative to maintain "Roadless Rule" protections for the "Tongass" and "Chugach"!

Sincerely,

DIANE KASTEL

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