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Title:

Comments: I am requesting that the Forest Service reject the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking # 54511 preferred alternative No. 6 and implement the No Action Alternative No.1 which maintains the current status of the Tongass National Forest roadless rule.

The current Tongass Roadless Rule has not been "disastrous for Alaskans and Southeast" , as asserted by the State of Alaska. If this assertion were true then why has public sentiment throughout the region been overwhelmingly in favor of keeping the rule intact? The Forest Service needs to reject this red herring and adhere to the wishes and wisdom of residents of the region who will be the most affected by any action on the Rule.

Another red herring used to justify exempting the Tongass from the Rule is the assertion that it is for more than just additional access to timber and that the Rule is too restrictive on the mining, energy and community infrastructure sectors. However, it's abundantly clear to me that Alternative 6 is exactly to provide more access to timber. Since the Rule has been in place all 58 requests for entry into roadless areas HAVE been granted. These include roads for mining projects, hydropower and intertie projects, among others. And most projects are approved within a month.

Two-thirds of the high-volume timber stands have already been logged at enormous social and economic cost. The Forest Service should be focusing on addressing the \$100 million backlog of watershed restoration needs and the \$68 million road maintenance backlog rather than on planning even more taxpayer subsidized road building and uneconomical old-growth timber harvesting. Requiring taxpayers to subsidize an industry for roughly 70 years to the tune of 100's of Millions of Dollars, should convince anyone that that industry is not economically viable. The Forest Service should stop the bleeding and keep the Roadless Rule in place.

Again, I call on the Forest Service to reject Alternative 6 and implement Alternative 1 and maintain the current Tongass Roadless Rule.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this vitally important issue.

-Brian Lynch

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