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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Tongass

Keep the Tongass roadless.

The health of our bodies and humankind relies upon the health of the earth. With most places being impacted by humans and man-made infrastructure, the last thing we need is for the Tongass to have roads. You can look at this argument scientifically, trees sequester Carbon and rising planetary temperatures require more Carbon sequestering means (aka not cutting down trees, but rather fostering old-growth stands to enable more of this). The Tongass is said to sequester 8% of the USA's carbon emissions. Studies have also shown that the soil in old-growth forests is some of the richest and most biodiverse. The soils have proven that they too can sequester carbon. Indeed, old-growth forests are rich in biodiverse wildlife too. These species need non-disturbed areas and corridors to live, the more the better. These are scientific reasons why the Tongass should be kept roadless.

Health can be seen in this physical and biodiversity, but it can also be looked at through the lens of humans connecting with the earth, something we used to innately do and be in a symbiotic relationship with during primordial times. It is 'woo' to say that nature communicates with us, but I believe this to be true. Indigenous historically were called savages, but they are the most sophisticated peoples who worked within the realm of sensory awareness. The forest and the natural world engages us in ways that have not and perhaps will not ever be measured scientifically. The indigenous know how to live in unison and reciprocity with the land by not disturbing it, but treating 'it' as a sensuous being. Perhaps these are reasons why the US government should consider giving land back to the people who originally lived reciprocally with it. We (white people) need to be taught the ways of the land, the ways of interspecies communication, and reciprocity. One way to start is to let this land be.

The older the forest, the more time has passed through it. This imbues a spirit that is old and wise, multigenerational and all-knowing. Spiritual health in our nation and across the globe is declining. Connection to spirit can be seen as organized religion, but really it is bigger than that. Our spirits need this forest. If you are reading this and think that is silly, it's ok. But ancient and indigenous cultures and medical practices demonstrate that connection to mind, body, emotion, and spirit leads to health. Whether it is science, spirit, or the pleasure of being in the woods, please continue to allow the Tongass to be roadless.

The forest is more than you can see. An old-growth forest is able to communicate via mycelium, share resources (interspecies), and connect. We need the forest as an example of what humans too are capable of. Nourish your roots and your ancestors, honor the indigenous and allow nature to create rich soil. Save the trees and animals from disturbance and destruction. Allow the Tongass to be an example of health by NOT creating roads for generations to come. Thank you.

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