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Organization:

Title:

Comments: re Roadless Rule 2001

To the USDA Forest Service:

From my perspective, it's simple-if an area (any area, any size) has been designated as 'protected,' there must be no exceptions to the rule.

And it's not that we're saving a bunch of trees &quot;for future generations&quot; to marvel at how nice the world once was. We're protecting giant forests and ecosystems that play critical roles in the well-being of the planet. And we need to see it not as 'saving this land for future generations,' but 'protecting the re-generation of this land so it can save us.'

When business, people, or communities start lobbying for their own interests, THAT'S EXACTLY WHEN A RULE NEEDS TO STAND STRONG. This rule was ENACTED to protect these priceless, irreplaceable forests from outside interests. And the State of Alaska KNEW back in 2001 (and way, way before that) that the land and the law would inevitably be threatened.

Now is when we have to say, &quot;Sorry, but no. These lands may not be made more accessible to humans and industry, may not be parceled out, or even-as is now being posed-help poor rural folks improve their standard of living.&quot; There will always be reasons to disturb or destroy the environment, but the PURPOSE of this law is to NOT ALLOW it here.&quot;

&quot;We don't want to protect it anymore, we changed our minds,&quot; is a weird message from the State, and would be even weirder if the Federal Government got on board. &quot;We don't care as much as we used to,&quot; is a tragic reason to downgrade legislation, hard-won by the majority as the right thing to do.

Also, if our elected officials spend their time and our money undoing the work of their recent predecessors, we get nowhere and everything becomes partisan politics instead of stewarding what sustains us and finding viable solutions and alternatives.

Beware, too: the breaking of one rule opens a dangerous door to the debasing of other rules. Then nothing is sacred and it's all a big game.

Very sincerely,

Wendy Raebeck

P.S. When the people who've been designated to comment on a study or issue are all 'appointed' by the governor, that's not a valid or authentic study, and shouldn't hold sway in decision-making about said issue. I'm surprised it was referred to at all in the documentation of this issue.

[Position]