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Title:

Comments: Public Comment on The Roadless Rule for the Tongass

To the USFS,

I want to encourage the Forest Service to choose the NO CHANGE option regarding the US Forest Service Roadless rule for the Tongass National Forest.

The single most important reason is change.

The first thing to note is, NO OTHER NATIONAL FOREST STORES MORE CARBON THAN THE TONGASS .

The Tongass is a natural carbon sink, holding an estimated 8% of all carbon stored in U.S. national forests. All of our National Forests sequester 14-16 % of carbon so the Tongass sequesters about half of all carbon of the US forests. Given that information it concerns me that the USFS would choose to exempt the Tongass from the Roadless Rule as it proves worthy as an undisturbed natural resource in a historical point in time in which we must do everything possible to stay carbon neutral and keep global temperatures from rising 2 degrees Celsius. The idea of removing the Roadless rule for the Tongass concerns me greatly .The Tongass is a living breathing ecosystem that falls under the guise of LUNGS of the EARTH.

We know that old growth trees sequester more carbon than young trees. And we know fragmenting the Tongass will decrease the ability to sequester as much carbon.

I found this on the USFS website, it is the first sentence of what I believe is your mission statement. "Caring for the Land and Serving People&quot;The Forest Service manages the National Forests and Grasslands for sustainable multiple-uses to meet the diverse needs of people, ensure the health of our natural resources, provide recreational opportunities, manage wildfire, guard against invasive threats, and work with State and private forest landowners, cities and communities, and international cooperation.

Does Action 6 uphold the USFS mission?

I would remark that sequestering carbon fits many points of the USFS mission better than logging which will benefit a relative few.

The report written by Geos states the Tongass is a global champion in sequestering (absorbing) atmospheric carbon and storing it long-term in its ancient trees, productive soils, and dense rainforest foliage. Because it is one of the world's last relatively intact temperate rainforests, and it has a maritime climate, the Tongass is Alaska's first line of climate change defense and a climate refuge for its world-class salmon and wildlife populations[hellip]. Recognizing the critical need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to keep global warming temperatures below a dangerous 2[ordm] C (~4[ordm] F) anticipated increase.

The Roadless Rule is a wise document and the US Forest Service should not be trying to exempt Alaska from it. Instead, at this critical point in time in reference to run away global warming I feel the US Forest Service should start looking into the Tongass as one of the planet's more valuable carbon sinks.

Furthermore, The Roadless Rule focused in 2001 on concerns for the future not knowing climate change was going to be one of them. The document explains the necessity to protect national forests for the protection of

maintaining watersheds for surrounding drinking water, healthy ecosystems, endangered species, cultural and recreational importance. It goes on to talk about how creating this federal document would allow better protection through federal oversight decreasing controversy. And it is working. There is absolutely no need to exempt Alaska from the Roadless Rule.

In summary, I urge the NO CHANGE option.

Thank you kindly for your work. Please email me to let me know this email has been submitted and read.

Sincerely,

Laura Stats

[Position]