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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Protect the Tongass National Forest from road construction

Dear U.S. Forest Service,

I'm writing about the Tongass National Forest. In years past I've supported protection for this remnant of American wilderness, and I will continue writing to you, or to anyone who will take seriously the protection of this land.

I understand how government agencies come to view the lands under their protection as properties of the agency. Years ago I worked for the National Park Service and I admit that I still have the attitude that the National Parks are somehow "mine." But they're not, of course. The public lands administered by government agencies belong to the American people.

Poll after poll show that the people of America want protection, not development, for their public lands and the wildlife that inhabit them. If you hear otherwise, you are listening to the extractive industries - lumber and road building in the case of the Tongass.

You are in a position to carry out the public will: Do not eliminate the Roadless Rule for the Tongass. Select the no action alternative. Roads will begin the destruction of fisheries and habitat for bears, wolves, and other land dwellers. Logging will release stored carbon into an already overloaded atmosphere. The tourist and fishing industries - Alaskan economic engines - will decline.

And you can do more to prevent climate and economic harm in Alaska. Reverse your plan to open roadless areas in the Chugach National Forest to roads and clearcutting. Obey the 2001 Roadless Rule, which shelters water, wildlife habitat and recreation.

The "no action" alternative is your best alternative for the Tongass and Chugach.

Sincerely,

Mary Robinson

Sacramento, CA 95819

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