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Organization:

Title:

Comments: My name is Corbin Schmidt and I live in Wenatchee, WA. I am writing a comment on the Alaska Roadless Rule DEIS because I am concerned with how the Rule and the proposed full exemption will affect the Tongass National Forest and the Chugach National Forest.

I am a yoga teacher and earth activist. For one, this land is home to so many beautiful human beings who have stories and history with this sacred land. My partner grew up in Juneau, AK and throughout the years has boasted of its grandeur and awe inspiring landscapes and 1 year ago I had the privilege to visit this magnificent spectacle. You can feel the power of the land as soon as you arrive its overwhelming. This land is known for its pure drinking water and most intact wildlife habitat, not to mention the old-growth trees that hold an ancient presence that is so moving. Before destroying this area I think that each person vouching to cut through this area spend one month in relationship with this land, its people (native and local), hearing their stories, walking their footsteps. Its so easy to look through glasses of profit and be far removed from reality for selfish gain but I hope thats not the game we will play here. Life is about connection and love, not money. The local tourism and commercial fishing rely on the Tongass for its undisturbed and intact nature! I thought that America was For The People not For Big Companies. I hope that we will see with our hearts and not greed.

I urge the Forest Service to select Alternative 1, the no action alternative, for the final decision on the Alaska Roadless Rule. This alternative protects the inventoried roadless areas in Alaska that are full of pristine wilderness and provide important fish and wildlife habitat, and already allows for important community and economic development projects. As an American citizen, I value the Tongass National Forest and the Chugach National Forest for its wild salmon populations and the world-class fishing opportunities, its status as America's best natural solution to climate change and its sequestering of millions of metric tons of carbon and mitigating climate change, its huge swaths of intact ecosystems and all the biodiversity it contains, its status as the largest intact temperate rainforest in the world, the recreational opportunities it provides, the high density of incredible wildlife it contains, to keep public lands wild for future generations, its status as a national and global treasure, the lifestyles of the indigenous communities that the forest supports. A full exemption does not protect these priorities, nor does it effectively balance economic development with the countless other benefits provided by roadless areas. I would like the Forest Service to manage roadless areas for low-impact recreation (camping, hiking, hunting, foraging, etc), passive/active watershed restoration (stream and habitat) to improve/maintain roadless characteristics (culvert removal/replacement, improve fish passage, wildlife thinning, etc). It is important to me that high-value intact habitat including the T77 watersheds and the TNC conservation priority areas retain their roadless protections in any alternative selected.

The Forest Service is wasting taxpayers' valuable time and money by trying to prop up a failing timber industry in Southeast Alaska. The nonpartisan, independent taxpayer watchdog Taxpayers for Common Sense reported that the Tongass timber program has losses of over \$600 million of taxpayers money in the past 20 years. I would rather see my taxpayer dollars used to restore salmon habitat that was hurt by past logging practices, establish the economic value of the carbon stored in the Tongass, perform restorative actions that support wildlife populations on previously degraded landscapes that support wildlife populations. We need to stop subsidizing the clearcutting of old growth on the Tongass through taxpayer funded roadbuilding. If a full exemption were chosen,

it would not create opportunities and would instead prioritize the special interests of one industry over the interests of the entire American public.

The Tongass is Americas homegrown natural solution to climate change. The forest sequesters 8% of the carbon stored in forests throughout the contiguous US states, some 3 billion metric tons of it. We must take action to mitigate and adapt to climate change, and maintaining the Tongass in a roadless state is critical for a sustainable future

[Position]