

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 12/12/2019 9:00:00 AM

First name: Emily

Last name: Clark

Organization:

Title:

Comments: My name is Emily Clark and I live in Sitka, AK. I've lived in Sitka since 2006. The forest and ocean are interconnected landscapes-- subsistence food that comes from either of these places is dependent on healthy forest systems. I eat salmon, venison, berries, and a variety of other greens that have been harvested from our lands. All of these sources are put at risk when the Tongass is opened up for more roads and logging operations. I also work in the tourism industry as a side job in the summer time. People travel to Alaska because of the wilderness and intact ecosystems we currently have. If we don't protect our lands, tourism is going to suffer. 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 impact my fishing, subsistence harvesting, foraging for wild foods, the peace and solitude I find in nature, recreating, the status of the Tongass as a national and global treasure, the forest's ability to sequester carbon and mitigate climate change impacts, and the conservation of resources for future generations .

Out of the alternatives described in the AKRR DEIS I support alternative 1: no action. It protects important fish and wildlife habitat from clearcutting and roadbuilding. I depend on roadless areas in the Tongass National Forest for economic livelihood, healthy fish habitat, foraging and gathering wild foods, recreating and enjoying nature, and carbon sequestration and local climate change mitigation. A full exemption does not protect these values, nor does it effectively balance economic development and conservation of roadless area characteristics. A full exemption from the Roadless Rule and increased logging and roadbuilding will negatively impact the Tongass and what I and many others use and depend on the forest to provide for us.

The Roadless areas on the Tongass that are especially important to me are those on or around all of the inventoried roadless areas on the Tongass. I want the roadless areas in these locations to stay in roadless status in any alternative selected by the Forest Service, and be managed to provide for the uses and activities I listed above. It is important to me that the T77 and the TNC conservation priority areas retain their roadless protections.

I do not support the Forest Services preferred alternative of a full exemption. A full exemption is not in the interests of Southeast Alaskans who live in and use the Tongass National Forest, because It is time to make a change in how we take and use resources from our land. What has been done in the past is no longer a viable option-- we are already seeing the devastating impacts of climate change, overfishing, pollution, etc because of our past decisions and methodologies. It is our responsibility to start protecting our resources by using them sustainably. If we don't start now, it won't just be our economy that will suffer, it will be the entirety of our well-being and health.. The State of Alaska says that a full exemption is needed for rural economic development opportunities. However, a full exemption would not help create more rural economic development opportunities, it would instead harm our existing rural economies that are based on the visitor industry and commercial fishing industry.

It would further harm rural economic opportunities because pursuing the same outdated economic model of old

growth clearcut harvesting for export stifles innovation and possibility in other sectors, such as mariculture, sustainable young growth harvest, and rural agriculture. If the Forest Service wants to support rural economic development, they should invest in creating and maintaining recreation infrastructure transition to second growth logging devote resources to support our fishing and visitor industries improve and streamline existing permitting processes for important community projects rather than rehashing old conflicts.

I urge the Forest Service to prioritize the voices of Southeast Alaskans over those of our political representation and corporate interests. Choosing a full exemption will not create a long lasting, durable solution for roadless areas on the Tongass. It will only increase the legal challenges, uncertainty for businesses, and conflict on the Tongass going forward.

[Position]

[Position]