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First name: Laurinda

Last name: Marcello

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Secretary Perdue & USDA Forest Service,

After attending the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking meeting held during November in Sitka, I urge you to retain Alternative 1 - No Action.

There are two main areas of concern with the other Alternatives (and Alternatives 3, 4, 5, and 6 in particular):

1. My education and prior work experience in biology & fisheries science leads me to the conclusion that ecosystem and fisheries impacts would be significantly more adverse than stated in the Draft EIS for Alternatives 3, 4, 5, and 6. The table 2-11 "Comparison of Alternatives" claims that there would be "neutral/no effect" to fisheries under any of the alternatives. It additionally states that alternatives 2-6 would be "similar to alternative 1" with regards to protection of terrestrial and aquatic wildlife habitat and ecosystem diversity. Simply put, given that Alternative 3 removes over a million acres of roadless area and Alternative 6 removes all roadless acreage, these Alternatives represent substantial changes from the status quo.

The five Pacific Salmon species in Southeast Alaska rely on quality spawning grounds and juvenile habitat for a successful fishery. When habitat concerns are dismissed and development is allowed near riparian areas, salmon mortality increases. Soil disturbances can cause excess turbidity of stream water leading to increasing temperatures and decreasing dissolved oxygen levels.

Salmon aren't the only species reliant on a healthy ecosystem. Brown bears can be affected both by the health of salmon runs and also by terrestrial habitat disruption. Brown bears have been shown to alter their home range & migration patterns in response to habitat fragmentation including logging roads, clear-cuts, and second-growth forests. Increasing development will have a direct negative effect on brown bear cub survival to adulthood.

2. The potential for increased economic output from timber sales must be weighed against economic costs in the fishing and recreation or visitor industries.

The Sitka Pulp Mill was still in operation during my childhood. In those days safely navigating a boat was not always possible. The Pulp Mill rafted logs to its Silver Bay facility. Inevitably, some of those logs would escape the rafts and bob up and down standing on end in the water. One summer, our sport fishing boat lost two

propellers to log-caused damage and in another summer a log hit forced us to patch the boat's fiberglass hull. My family was not alone in experiencing conflict between logging & boat travel. If there is a return to larger-scale logging as a result of timber sales, what impact will that have on marine traffic? We have an incredible number of vessels using our waterways including charter, commercial, sport, and subsistence boats, Alaska Marine Highway vessels, day tour operators, and the cruise ship industry.

In Sitka some of the biggest contributors to our economy are fishing, fish processing, and the visitor industry. Timber jobs are a small portion of all jobs available throughout the region. What costs does aiding the timber industry impose on the more commercially important tourism & fishing sectors?

Thank you for your consideration of retaining Alternative 1 - No Action.

Sincerely,

Laurinda Marcello

[Position]