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Organization:

Title:

Comments: HC620

Dear Secretary Perdue and Senator Murkowski,

I am currently on a boat cruise in Redoubt Bay, an iconic local subsistence and recreation site. Located just twelve miles from the city of Sitka, Redoubt Falls is one of Sitka's most important subsistence fishing spots. We dipnet for Redoubt sockeye to stock our freezers and cupboards with the rich red flesh of this all-important fish. In recent years, the Forest Service has estimated that Redoubt has provided up to 60% of the total sockeye subsistence harvest in the Sitka Management Area. We feed our families out of Tongass watershed like Redoubt Bay.

The Forest Service supports our subsistence harvest by maintaining a weir system at Redoubt to monitor and count the fish entering the lake. The Forest Service coordinates with the Alaska Department of Fish & Game to make management decisions based on the data collected throughout the season, which determines the safe allotment limit for our subsistence harvest. Our harvest of salmon depends entirely on the intact ecosystem and productivity of Tongass watersheds. Healthy forests support our ability to fulfill our subsistence needs at Redoubt, as well as supporting commercial and sport salmon fisheries across the Tongass.

Currently, Redoubt Bay is listed as a T77 watershed. T77 watersheds are areas of the Tongass National Forest identified as particularly prolific, intact salmon habitat. Much of the 15,000 miles of streams on the Tongass support salmon populations, but the T77 watersheds are especially critical to protect. It is important to me that the 2001 Roadless Rule remains in place on high value salmon watersheds like the T77, and throughout the Tongass National Forest. Opening up these areas to more clearcutting and roadbuilding will jeopardize our way of life, and will sacrifice the spirit of Sitka that brings so many people to this special place. I support keeping the 2001 Roadless Rule in effect on the Tongass, and I urge the Secretary to select a no action alternative in the Alaska-specific Roadless rulemaking process. Please protect this land for future generations to enjoy in perpetuity.

Personal Comments: I am interested in learning more!

The slow decline of our salmon population is well documented and pristine forest is the only hope for spawning grounds to provide for recovery.