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First name: Joan

Last name: Poole

Organization:

Title:

Comments: 'Roadless Rule' Protections for the Tongass National Forest must be kept in place

Dear U.S. Forest Service,

The Forest Service's plan to eliminate "Roadless Rule" protections for the Tongass National Forest appalls me. I urge you to select the "no action" alternative.

The Tongass is America's wildest remaining national forest, with more than 9 million acres of roadless areas. It is the natural habitat of a wide range of wildlife, including salmon, Alexander Archipelago wolves, and grizzly bears. It also stores a vast amount of carbon in its centuries-old trees, as do those in all boreal forests. Logging releases most of that carbon into the atmosphere.

Your proposal opens the door to clearcutting and bulldozing, dangerously irresponsible operations in this time of climate change.

The Tongass is a national treasure that belongs to all Americans. It must not be sacrificed to the timber industry, an industry that provides a small fraction of the jobs and income in Southeast Alaska compared with tourism and fishing. Both tourism and fishing rely on intact forests to thrive.

It's even more important to save these last remaining roadless forests because your agency has fragmented and logged so much of them, causing harm to wildlife and waters along the way.

I also oppose your plan to allow the agency to open any of the 5 million acres of roadless areas on the Chugach National Forest to bulldozing and clearcutting for logging. This is simply a backdoor repeal of the 2001 Roadless Rule, which protects all roadless lands because of the critical role they play in protecting pure water, secure wildlife habitat and remote recreation.

Please - think of future generations by selecting the "no action" alternative to maintain "Roadless Rule" protections for the Tongass and Chugach.

Sincerely,

Joan Poole

Summerfield, NC 27358

[Position]