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First name: Kyle

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Alaska Roadless Rulemaking #54511

Good morning,

The below comment was recorded on November 23, 2019 at the REI Flagship Store in Seattle, WA as part of a community meeting regarding the Alaska Roadless Rule. Washington Wild was given permission by the individual to submit this comment to the United States Forest Service on their behalf. Please add their comment into the record.

Thank you.

Kyle McDaniel

Seattle, WA 98106

Hi, I'm Kyle McDaniel from West Seattle. I'm something of a sleeping warrior. In the 1990s, I came to Washington state in order to stand against some of the timber sales that had been opened by the salvage logging rider signed by President Bill Clinton. As time progressed, I became more involved in nonviolent civil disobedience in our actual forest being cut and as an experience wilderness orienteer, I had the fortune of hiking into some of the trailless areas here in Washington state to observe a forest that may not exist anymore. Now, there's a very poignant feeling in a forest that may not exist anymore. It radiates with spiritual energy. Now, as a product of the Reagan and Sr. Bush era, I was typical of many gen-Xers devoid of spirituality, religion, patriotism. Deep within the wilderness of the old growth forest, I discovered my spirituality and a sense of patriotism and a lot of that comes from the wilderness areas and the national parks of

our country. That gave me a sense of what it meant to be American, not to be displaced, not to be a rebel, but to be part of this great nation and to find a place within it. So, every year during the logging season, I would travel from Port Townsend, Washington where I lived down to Northern California. I was part of the defense of Headwaters Forest in the Redwoods. I used my skills in orienteering to lead activists through endangered forest to conduct nonviolent civil disobedience, including tree sitting. And I lent myself to that and it was a great passion of mine. And eventually I, myself, spent 23 nights suspended between two redwoods on a traverse line, living in a hammock. We waited till mid-November of 1997 for a road bylaw to be unbuilt. We stayed up in those trees through cold, wet weather. And as the time passed, the loggers who had lodged a lot of hostility towards us began to respect us. They started leaving beer cans and chanterelles and other goodies at the bottom of the tree. They knew that we would sneak down in the middle of the night and get the goodies. So initially we made friends and then un-made the road and they went away. And the whole stand of trees, which was actually at right up against the Rockefeller forest in Noble State Park still stands today I actually protested Bill Clinton when he visited Bellevue College back in 1996 and advocated strongly for the roadless rule, as we also opposed some of the timber sales that had come open because of the salvage logging rider. When it was finally signed and instigated by our, our then president, I saw that as a kind of a crowning chapter in a fight that I had involved my life in for many years. So 20 years later, after not being involved in the environmental movement, I see the crown jewel of all roadless areas, which by the way, should be a wilderness area. Here in Washington state, roadless

areas have to be more than 3000 acres and a wilderness area more than 5,000. Why are these 9,000 acres not a protected wilderness area, much less than national park? So now as a father of a daughter who is an accomplished backpacker, I find that it's a duty to stand up now. I'm not part of any organization, but I plan to network and use my skills and communication and leadership to become more involved. And as we watch many of the things we hold sacred and dear in our country be whittled away and really under threat, this is where I must make my stand because the bottom of my heart, like I said, is the source. Wilderness is the source of my patriotism and my spirituality. It has given me such healing and it has allowed me to be a productive member of society. So when I finally moved to Seattle 20 years ago, I felt like I had fought a good fight and now I can go on with my life and be a normal person. And 20 years later, here I am again. So one of my favorite movies, Frank Herbert's Dune, got me into ecology in the first place and there's one line and it goes "the sleeper must awaken," and that's, that's what must happen now. The sleeper must awaken. We can't just be preaching to the choir. We've got to reach out in our communities and make this known, and it may seem like a very dark time in our country, but this is a choice we can make. This is an opportunity for us to seize our humanity and seize our sense of what it means to be an American, our patriotism and this land that the Tongass as well as some of the other places I've never

seen. But knowing that the crown jewel like in British Columbia and Bella Coola, the spirit bear area, those areas really need to be protected for all generations. Olympic National Park would not exist if people like us didn't come together nearly a hundred years ago. Yes, President Roosevelt signed it into law, but there were people like you that helped him get there. So I employ everyone to do what they can and I'm really happy to hear everybody speak today. It's profound moment for me, so thank you so much and good luck.

Hillary Sanders, Member and Engagement Manager

She/Her

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