

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 12/13/2019 9:00:00 AM

First name: Heather

Last name: Bauscher

Organization: Sitka Conservation Society

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.

Heather Bauscher, Tongass Community Organizer, Sitka Conservation Society

My name is Heather Bauscher. I'm the Tongass Community Organizer for the Sitka Conservation Society. I travel all over Southeast Alaska in all the rural communities, working on fish habitat issues and working on the Tongass issue right now. I want to acknowledge the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian people that have cared for the land since time immemorial and we're so grateful for that. Not only am I a community organizer, I also crew on fishing boats and actually I do a lot of my outreach either on fishing boats

while I'm crewing or using those methods to get around because we don't have a lot of roads. We travel by water. That's how we do it is by boat up there.

So, I wanted to say that's salmon is the lifeblood of Southeast Alaska. It is the thing that unites us across the Southeast, that unites us across Alaska and it connects us all across the Pacific Northwest. We are all salmon people and we all need to stand together right now. The story that the roadless rule impedes economic development is a flat out lie. And this process is a sham. There are provisions for road building for hydro. We did it in Sitka. We can have corridors between communities, even infrastructure, even mining. Greens Creek mine is in a roadless area. This isn't about the roads at all, and these roads aren't gonna help us. It's about what is protected by these areas that are roadless. So 55% of the Tongass is roadless and that is our remaining stands of old growth and our most important salmon watersheds. And these trees are far more valuable kept for salmon production, than for being cut for short term gain and shipped overseas. So thank you to Senator Cantwell for your leadership because we are not getting the help we need from our congressional delegation in Alaska or our governor for that matter. And they're all working against us right now. So we are getting more help from you down here. And it is so great to see so many people here in Seattle that care about this. They're not listening to us and there's only so many of us and the full exemption does not reflect what they told us at the beginning of this whole process. And it's not what we need for the future of people in Southeast Alaska. So we need all the help that we can get. And the hope and the inspiration I see is how folks have been coming together all across the region, all across the state, all across the country, the Pacific Northwest on this. And we need more people to speak up because there's not enough of us on our own in Southeast. So thank you everyone for being here together. Thank you for talking to more people about this issue so they realize what's at stake. And we are so grateful to

see so much love and support here. Thank you.

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Hillary Sanders, Member and Engagement Manager

She/Her

WASHINGTON WILD

[Position]