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Organization: Kariel Inc.

Title:

Comments: Alaska Roadless Rule

USDA Forest Service, Alaska Region

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Attn: Roadless Area Conservation; National Forest System Lands in Alaska

Dear Alaska Roadless Rulemaking Team:

My wife, Kari Johnson and I own Kariel Inc.; a small fishing company owning the commercial fishing vessel Kariel, and have fished the waters surrounding the Tongass National Forest, including Yakutat and out to the Bering sea. Kariel Inc has been in business since 1995 but Kari and/or myself have fished various boats in the waters of Southeast Alaska since 1974. We have lived in Petersburg, Port Alexander, and Sitka and have raised 3 children here in Southeast. Two of our children have returned to Sitka to raise their own families; committed to commercial fishing, and consequently, to the productivity of the Tongass Forest.

We are adamantly opposed to an "Alaska-specific roadless rule" which would exempt the Tongass from the protection from most new roadbuilding that all other National Forests depend on. The Tongass does not need more new industrial scale logging, subsidized by the federal government, in order to access the few remaining areas of valuable old-growth forest which also provide habitat for hundreds of salmon streams which thousands of current fishing industry jobs have depended on all along. And the streams, of course, dump into estuarine areas which are home to juvenile black cod, providing the main source of our family's income.

The money wasted by the forest service in new roadbuilding and effectively subsidizing the logging industry would be much better used in restoration work to repair the damage done in the past to salmon streams by logging and roadbuilding practices. Then recommissioning those roads necessary to access second growth areas identified by the Forest Service as the key to their previous priority of a new model of transition to second growth logging. Then the local people and those traveling from down south for the logging jobs would have the number of jobs supportable by a sustainable model of forestry.

Old Growth timber is not renewable, and harvest is not sustainable It takes too long to re create the habitat

trashed by old growth logging. Prime habitat is ruined and overall productivity of the forest is degraded by logging. The forest service has already figured out how to transition to a model of second growth logging, and very small scale older tree logging. This would allow the forest to support and cultivate the much more valuable forest resource of salmon, supporting thousands of current jobs, and to support other valuable industries like the variety of tourism businesses providing thousands of current jobs.

Leave the Roadless Rule in place. No exemption from the roadless rule for the Tongass.

Thank You for this opportunity to comment.

Steve Fish and Kari Johnson

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