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First name: Molly

Last name: Kimzey

Organization:

Title:

Comments: My name is Molly Kimzey and I live in Port Alexander, AK. I was born in Sitka, AK but have lived in Port Alexander, Meyers Chuck, Kasaan, Whale Pass, Naukati, and Craik Logging Camp. I am now living in Port Alexander on southern Baranof Island raising my sons. Both my husband and I grew up commercial salmon trolling and we now own and run a sport fishing lodge.

Our business contributes to the economy of SE Alaska with jobs, taxes, buying from other local businesses, and our guests spend money in stores, hotels and float plane flights. Our guests come to Alaska for the beauty and uniqueness that is the Tongass Forest. Without a healthy forest to support the fisheries and to enjoy we will not have guests returning each year because a vibrant forest is part of their trip.

A healthy forest is essential in not only our business but our subsistence based lifestyle. We harvest sockeye salmon to can and smoke for a mainstay in our diet. I am writing a comment on the Alaska Roadless Rule DEIS because I am concerned with how the Rule and the proposed full exemption will impact my fishing, hunting, subsistence harvesting, foraging for wild foods, the peace and solitude I find in nature, recreating, the status of the Tongass as a national and global treasure, the forest's ability to sequester carbon and mitigate climate change impacts, the conservation of resources for future generations .

Out of the alternatives described in the AKRR DEIS I support alternative 1: no action. It protects important fish and wildlife habitat from clearcutting and roadbuilding. I depend on roadless areas in the Tongass National Forest for economic livelihood, healthy fish habitat, deer habitat and subsistence hunting, foraging and gathering wild foods, recreating and enjoying nature, carbon sequestration and local climate change mitigation, viewing wildlife, keeping public lands wild for future generations, fiscal responsibility and saving taxpayer dollars . A full exemption does not protect these values, nor does it effectively balance economic development and conservation of roadless area characteristics. A full exemption from the Roadless Rule and increased logging and roadbuilding will negatively impact the Tongass and what I and many others use and depend on the forest to provide for us.

The Roadless areas on the Tongass that are especially important to me are those on or around Baranof Island, Kuiu Island, all of the inventoried roadless areas on the Tongass Admiralty Island. I want the roadless areas in these locations to stay in roadless status in any alternative selected by the Forest Service, and be managed to provide for the uses and activities I listed above. It is important to me that the T77 and the TNC conservation priority areas retain their roadless protections.

I do not support the Forest Services preferred alternative of a full exemption. A full exemption is not in the interests of Southeast Alaskans who live in and use the Tongass National Forest, because Exempting the Tongass from the roadless rule does not improve the lives of us who live here and have made a life from enjoying the healthy Tongass. We will loose business and have a less quality life.. The State of Alaska says that a full exemption is needed for rural economic development opportunities. However, a full exemption would not help create more rural economic development opportunities, it would instead harm our existing rural economies that are based on the visitor industry and commercial fishing industry.

It would further harm rural economic opportunities because pursuing the same outdated economic model of old growth clearcut harvesting for export stifles innovation and possibility in other sectors, such as mariculture, sustainable young growth harvest, and rural agriculture. If the Forest Service wants to support rural economic development, they should devote resources to support our fishing and visitor industries invest in creating and maintaining recreation infrastructure improve and streamline existing permitting processes for important community projects rather than rehashing old conflicts.

We need a healthy forest to support us locally but also globally. We need clean air, pristine rivers for salmon and the beauty of the forest to encourage sustainable tourism to provide a healthy local economy.

I urge the Forest Service to prioritize the voices of Southeast Alaskans over those of our political representation and corporate interests. Choosing a full exemption will not create a long lasting, durable solution for roadless areas on the Tongass. It will only increase the legal challenges, uncertainty for businesses, and conflict on the Tongass going forward.

[Position]