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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I'm a commercial fisherman in Southeast Alaska and an enrolled member of the Tlingit and Haida tribe. My family has relied on Alaska's wild waters and forest habitats for many generations. This lands wild resources not only sustain us and provide us with income but also a lifestyle. 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, the forest's ability to sequester carbon and mitigate climate change impacts, and the conservation of resources for future generations.

Out of the alternatives described in the AKRR DEIS I could potentially support alternative 2: open up roadless. It protects important fish and wildlife habitat from clearcutting and roadbuilding. I depend on roadless areas in the Tongass National Forest for economic livelihood and healthy fish habitat. A full exemption disregards these values, and it does not effectively balance economic development. 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.

A full exemption threatens and discounts the inhabitants of Southeast Alaska. Both wildlife and humans need this environment intact. It would further harm rural economic opportunities because pursuing the same outdated economic model of old growth clearcut harvesting for export stifles innovation and possibility in other sectors, such as mariculture, sustainable young growth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 improve and streamline existing permitting processes for important community projects.

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.

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