

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 12/17/2019 9:00:00 AM

First name: Erin

Last name: Larson

Organization:

Title:

Comments: My name is Erin Larson and I live in Anchorage, Alaska. I oppose the exemption of the Roadless Rule for Alaska, and am in support of Alternative Action 1 - No Action. As an ecologist, I am concerned about how expanding roads and logging in the Tongass National Forest will affect old-growth forest habitat and the organisms that rely on that habitat. Given increasing fragmentation of forest habitats and the steady decline of old-growth forest in the U.S.

I also am concerned about the quantity of carbon that is currently stored in these old growth forests that could be released if logging were to occur. The Carbon and Climate section of the DEIS is lacking in specific detail about how shifting composition of forest communities could affect carbon storage in the Tongass. In the Tongass, I would like to see a similar assessment to the stability of biome assessment done in the Chugach/Kenai area. Given the large uncertainty around how changes in forest communities might occur in the Tongass under climate change, it seems that we do not have enough adequate information to understand the various ways the Tongass forest communities may change.

Additionally, the potential impacts of the roadless rule exemption on drinking water quality and other elements of environmental public health are not adequately addressed in the DEIS.

Finally, I would like to see a more quantitative, rather than qualitative, assessment of potential impacts on the tourism industry. The tourism industry in Southeast Alaska supports far more jobs than the timber industry ever has, and so fully understanding potential impacts on this important sector of the economy should be prioritized.

[Position]

[Position]