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First name: Leif

Last name: Mjos

Organization:

Title:

Comments: To whom it may concern,

I would like to submit a comment on the proposed roadless rule changes for the Tongass National Forest.

I am a lifelong Alaskan of almost 40 years. I have extensive work experience in field biology, commercial fishing, seafood processing, carpentry, wilderness guiding and educating, and remote backcountry guiding. In addition I am personally committed to exploring the far reaches of my home state from the tip of the Aleutian Islands to the Tongass in southeast Alaska, from the Kenai Peninsula to the St. Elias Range and the Arctic Circle. I live in Alaska because it retains much of its original wild character and I know that much of the population lives here for similar reasons. On my travels through southeast AK on the ferry system, or by plane or private boat, I know why visitors come to see and experience that unique landscape. Visitors do NOT come to see the desolation left behind after industrial logging. They come to see vast intact forests and their associated ecosystems, the last of their kind on Earth. They do NOT come to see roads and roadbuilding activities. They have seen that where they come from. Intact ecosystems that support vibrant food webs and human communities are what sets Alaska and the Tongass apart from the norm across North America and the world.

It is regrettable that jobs associated with the logging industry will suffer from the preservation of these roadless areas. Fortunately, humans are the most adaptable species on the planet, and with support those who used to work in the extractive resource industry can transition to jobs that capitalize on other skills. It is a well known fact that the visitor economies of Alaska and in the communities in and around the Tongass far surpass the current or historic economies of logging. People flock to Alaska to experience something that has been lost in much of the rest of the world- intact natural systems and wilderness.

I support the Roadless Rule as it stands now. I would support strengthening its language and scope, but for the time being I am opposed to repealing any part of the Roadless Rule or offering an exemption from the Rule to the State of Alaska. In this case, No Action is the Best Action.

Thank you for considering my comment.

[Position]

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