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Organization:

Title:

Comments: My name is Jasmine Ileremia and I live in Petersburg, AK. I've lived in Petersburg since I was 10 years old. I am a commercial fisherman and I use fishing as my main source of income. As a university student, I fish to be able to pay for tuition, rent, and my cost of living. 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, and 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 healthy fish habitat, and for keeping public lands wild for future generations. 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 the central mainland from Hobart Bay to Stikine River, Wrangell and Etolin Islands, Kupreanof Island, Baranof Island, Admiralty Island, the northern mainland above Port Snettisham, and all of the inventoried roadless areas on the Tongass. I want the roadless areas in these locations to stay in roadless status in any alternative selected by the Forest Service, and be managed in a sustainable, thoughtful way. 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 we cannot ignore the impact a healthy environment has on our communities. We depend on the land to provide healthy habitat for salmon, which in turn provides us with healthy economies and supports our communities. Full exemption would ignore our economical and cultural connection to the land and harm our communities. While the State of Alaska may say 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.

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 with the Tongass going forward.

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