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Organization:

Title:

Comments: My name is Naomi Bargmann and I live in Sitka, AK. I have lived in Sitka for seven years. I love the Tongass because it is beautiful, pristine, and life giving. I love to hike, bird, eat fish and wild game. 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 hunting, fishing, 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 deer habitat and subsistence hunting, viewing wildlife, keeping public lands wild for future generations, fiscal responsibility and saving taxpayer dollars carbon sequestration and local climate change mitigation, recreating and enjoying nature, foraging and gathering wild foods, healthy fish habitat. 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. 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 Over 90% of local people in the Tongass are against a full exemption. It is a huge burden on the taxpayers and our habitat.. 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 transition to second growth logging invest in creating and maintaining recreation infrastructure improve and streamline existing permitting processes for important community projects rather than rehashing old conflicts.

The Tongass provides habitat for all kinds of wildlife, in particular, the marbled murrelet is a seabird who depends

on old growth forests for nesting habitat. Their populations have undergone a drastic decline of over 70% since the 1990's. Without old growth forest, the species' numbers will continue to plummet. The Tongass is the last stronghold for this species which is endangered/threatened throughout the rest of its range in the Pacific Northwest.

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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