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First name: Peter

Last name: Vu

Organization:

Title:

Comments: My name is Peter Vu and I live in Sitka, AK. I have lived in Southeast Alaska for 4 years, and plan to remain in Southeast Alaska. 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, subsistence harvesting, hunting, 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. The rule is working fine as it is by balancing the conservation of our fish and wildlife habitat with important development projects.. I depend on roadless areas in the Tongass National Forest for economic livelihood, deer habitat and subsistence hunting, healthy fish habitat, foraging and gathering wild foods, recreating and enjoying nature, viewing wildlife, carbon sequestration and local climate change mitigation, keeping public lands wild for future generations, fiscal responsibility and saving taxpayer dollars . 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, Kupreanof Island, Chichagof 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 Speaking with neighbors, friends, and community members, the notion that Southeast Alaska would support a full exemption is completely misaligned with our values. I have yet to meet a single person who calls Southeast Alaska home that would not only disavow the full exemption, but are completely frustrated that the full exemption rule is a possible option. The full exemption policy infringes on our personal, cultural, and economic relationships with these lands. The possibility of such a policy instills a heavy sense of doubt and concern, which can be translated to stress, as we wonder what the negative repercussions would yield.. 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 transition to second growth logging devote resources to support our fishing and visitor

industries invest in creating and maintaining recreation infrastructure improve and streamline existing permitting processes for important community projects rather than rehashing old conflicts.

The Tongass National Forest produces more than economic prosperity through logging. It deeply enriches our lives here in Southeast Alaska, and that is only one aspect of its necessary intact integrity. It provides many people with sustainable jobs and helps feed our families in both monetary and harvesting terms. The Tongass needs to remain as intact as possible, particularly the old growth forest, as these forests are the integral to the healthy ecosystem we all depend upon here in Southeast Alaska. Please choose a no action alternative to the roadless rule. It is a decision that will carry weight for many years to come.

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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