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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to express my objection to making the Tongass exempt from the roadless rule. I have lived and worked in Alaska for six years. Recreating in my seakayak and working in the tourist industry I have come to understand the importance of wild, untrammeled places for both the individual and the Alaska State, Making the Tongass exempt from the roadless rule is equivalent of offering up our most sacred house to renters who won't pay much but will loot, pollute and destroy in the name of short term profits for few. Alaskans are waking up to the destruction of the wild places, untrammeled habitat, free flowing spawning grounds that make up the soul of the state (not to mention the economy.) The roadless rule is the last defense for the already decimated stands of old growth spruce and hemlock the Tongass is famous for. The logging done off of these new roads will create jobs for few and paper products that quite literally add insult to injury: pulp, toilet paper.

You may think that removing the roadless rule will appease conservative constituents, or that conservative voters can be swept along with the current regime narrative: regulations keep you off your land, regulations keep money out of your pocket, regulations are a waste. But Alaskans are smarter, and their connection to the land, the game, the fish guides them to see this proposed action for what it is: the selling out of a national, a global treasure to appease an already wealthy and powerful majority.

I have also had the pleasure of working alongside interpreters and activists of the Hoonah Tlingit. You should know that they will not stop fighting. They will use the growing platform of native people to shine a spotlight on the bought pollutions and government officials who have proposed this action. If the USDA does not uphold its duty to manage land in the interest of US citizens of today and the future, the Tlingit activists in particular will not let them sleep.

And please, spare the embarrassment and scandal of proposing this deforesting measure at the same time that climate change is starving Glaciers of ice, killing salmon in warm anoxic streams, ravaging the state with unprecedented wildfires, and thawing the ground beneath your constituents feet. Now? In this crisis, you want to propose a rule that will allow for the felling of trees that have soaked up carbon for millennia. I do not work for the Forest Service or the USDA, but if I did and this action went through, I would be embarrassed to show up at an agency that proports using science yet willfully ignores scientists and stokes the flames of a crisis already eroding the economy and livelihoods of Alaskans.

No one could, in good faith, support removing the roadless rule in the Tongass. I object over this measure. I hope that public comment periods do actually matter.

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