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First name: Emily

Last name: Wright

Organization:

Title:

Comments: My name is Emily Wright and I live in Juneau, AK. My name is Emily Wright. Ive lived in Alaska for 7 years and plan on calling this home forever. I just had a daughter named Nola in May and I am looking forward to sharing the wild and untouched beauty of the Tongass rainforest with her. Its this raw beauty that made me fall in love with Alaska and want to stay. Im a registered nurse and hiking and being in nature is how I unwind from my high stress job. My family relies on the Tongass to hunt and fish for our food and the deer, the mountain goat, the ptarmigan and the bears need us to protect them because these animals need trees and cannot speak up for themselves. If we dont persevere these resources then future generations will not be able to partake in subsistence living as Alaskans have always done. I have seen the ugly effects of deforestation in the rest of the United States. Please preserve the wild beauty of the Tongass and do not take action on the roadless rule. Im writing this letter because as an Alaskan resident I value wilderness and I am hoping these places can be preserved for future generations like my daughters. Thank you. 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, hunting, 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 healthy fish habitat, deer habitat and subsistence hunting, foraging and gathering wild foods, recreating and enjoying nature, carbon sequestration and local climate change mitigation, viewing wildlife, 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 Admiralty Island, the northern mainland above Port Snettisham (around Juneau), Baranof Island, the central mainland from Hobart Bay to Stikine River, the southern mainland from Bradfield Canal to Dixon Entrance Kupreanof Island, Kuiu Island, Wrangell and Etolin Islands, Prince of Wales Island, Revillagigedo Island (near Ketchikan), Yakutat forelands, 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 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 Alaskans have always relied on subsistence living in wild places and need to continue to be allowed to do so. Keep the Tongass wild.. 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 improve and streamline existing permitting processes for important community projects rather than rehashing old conflicts invest in creating and maintaining recreation infrastructure.

Again please persevere this wilderness so my daughter and other young Alaskans can continue to enjoy it.

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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