

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 12/15/2019 9:00:00 AM

First name: Mary

Last name: Petrosky

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to express my strong opposition to a logging plan proposed for Tongass National Forest by the Trump administration and Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue. The proposed plan would slash protections for more than 9 million acres of the Tongass National Forest, affecting an area larger than Yellowstone, Glacier and Grand Canyon national parks combined.

There are many reasons that building roads in the Tongass has been prohibited under a rule published in the last days of President Bill Clintons administration. For one, it is well documented that, historically, large-scale industrial logging has damaged salmon streams. The Tongass is spawning ground for 40 percent of wild salmon along the West Coast. Allowing road building and logging in the Tongass would seriously threaten the survival of these salmon as well as destroy the ecosystems and local communities that depend on the fish.

In addition, in the face of a rapidly warming planet, it's the height of irresponsibility to log this forest. The Tongass stores more carbon removed from the atmosphere than any other national forest in the country in its old-growth Sitka spruce, hemlock and cedar trees. It helps protect Alaska, which is warming more than twice as fast from climate change as our planet overall. The forest holds about 650 million tons of carbon or about half of U.S. carbon dioxide emissions in 2017.

I urge you in the strongest possible terms to reject any plans to open up the Tongass National Forest -- a resource that belongs to ALL Americans -- to logging or any commercial exploitation.

[Position]

[Position]