

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 12/16/2019 9:00:00 AM

First name: Anne

Last name: Bennett

Organization: Independent physician recruiter.

Title:

Comments: I am writing to ask the Forest Service to MAINTAIN current roadless areas in the Tongass and Chugach National Forest as designated under the 2001 Roadless Rule.

According to the Alaska Forest Association there are 129 million forested acres across the state. Roadless areas account for approximately 11.5 percent of total forested area. That means 88.5% of forested land is available for logging. I understand that accessibility may be limiting. Regardless- 88.5 percent of forested land is outside the roadless area. That's significant.

My research indicates that the roadless areas provide important salmon spawning ground. While there may be debate- it's also an important means of capturing carbon in the atmosphere; a critical carbon bank during a time of climate change.

Furthermore, according to the November 4, 2019, Juneau Empire article, the "Tlingit & Haida, Angoon Community Association, Hoonah Indian Association, Organized Village of Kasaan, Hydaburg Cooperative Association and the Organized Village of Kake issued a joint statement condemning the Forest Services plan." I do not support industry overlooking the interests and opinion of tribal groups. They have a vested interest in the area. In fact, Tribal groups should have final say.

I would ask the US Forest Service to maintain current roadless areas in the Tongass and Chugach National Forest. Thank you.

[Position]

[Position]