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First name: Julie

Last name: Garver

Organization:

Title:

Comments: The Tongass Forest has trees that are more than 1,000 years old. One of the few precious old-growth forests remaining in our country, it 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. Not to mention the irreversible damage to biodiversity in an age of escalating extinctions caused by human activity.

Building roads in the Tongass is prohibited under a rule published in the last days of President Bill Clintons administration. The Alaska Forest Association, an industry group that supports logging, received more than \$200,000 from a USDA grant that was supposed to help states fight fires. The money was used to support undoing prohibitions against building roads.

Historically, large-scale industrial logging has damaged salmon streams. The Tongass is spawning ground for 40 percent of wild salmon along the West Coast. The Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian people rely on the land for cultural and traditional practices like hunting and fishing.

As a citizen of this proud country, I urge you not to allow logging in this forest.

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