

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

First name: Elizabeth

Last name: Flory

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing in favor of keeping the roadless rule for the Tongass. Wilderness lands with large areas of intact old-growth forest are irreplaceable once lost to development. The Tongass supports a remarkable ecosystem of salmon and bears, which in turn support the economy of Southeast Alaska. Around \$2 billion a year comes into the region from fishing and tourism, both of which would be harmed by cutting trees. It makes no sense to jeopardize the economy generated by the intact forest by cutting it down. The timber industry must be heavily subsidized to create a few short-term jobs that would destroy salmon streams and the scenic beauty that attracts visitors. Tourists do not come to see clearcut areas of forest stumps and trees are necessary around salmon streams to keep water temperatures cool in summer, prevent exposed soil polluting streams and keep a continuous supply of dead wood in the streams to create sheltering pools for young salmon. The forest is the place we go to hunt deer, but logged forests grow back too dense and dark to allow understory plants to live and without those the deer have no food. The forest is a huge carbon sink soaking up carbon dioxide and helping stave off the warming of our climate at a time when so many forests around the world are being destroyed by fire. For our local economy, for our dinner table, for the future of the planet we cannot afford to develop the Tongass so I urge you to keep it roadless.

[POSITION]