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Organization:

Title:

Comments: The Tongass is why I am here. The Tongass is why I have a job. The Tongass puts food on my table. The Tongass keeps me healthy. The Tongass is my home. I came to Alaska for the first time eight years ago to work in tourism in Southeast Alaska, sharing the wild beauty of the Tongass with hundreds of thousands of visitors. I take groups of hikers into the Tongass to have a wilderness experience they came to Alaska for. I take visitors into the Denver and Laughton Valleys, walking amongst giant old growth spruce and hemlock and walking on quickly melting glaciers. These visitors come to see the wild beauty, the last frontier. They come to get away from the destruction and deforestation not to see more of it. My work in tourism, environmental fields, and with the local tribes has really opened my eyes to how incredibly rare and special this place is that we live in, there is really nothing else like this. I've been to other communities in Southeast that have seen the destruction of logging. Old growth forests clear-cut, salmon habitat destroyed, wildlife habitat ruined. When will we learn? When will we see the value wilderness has?

The Tongass is the largest intact temperate rainforest in the world. How special is that?! Very little of the world's forests are old growth. Some of our trees are thousands of years old. Shouldn't Alaska want to protect this special resource? Why here? Shouldn't we learn from Washington and Oregon? These places have lost many of their wild salmon runs. They have logged their old growth forests and destroyed habitat. Salmon support so many people, families and businesses here in Southeast Alaska, shouldn't we think of them? Our wilderness and wild salmon runs are some of our greatest resources and we should do everything in our power to protect them. This means supporting the Roadless Rule and protecting the Tongass National Forest from logging.

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