

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 12/17/2019 9:00:00 AM

First name: Stephen

Last name: Hunt

Organization:

Title:

Comments: HC3143

U.S. Forest Service Alaska Roadless Rule Committee:

For nearly 20 years, I've made the effort to visit the Tongass National Forest, fly rod in hand, to chase salmon, trout and char in one of the last, best places on the planet to do so. The Tongass remains largely wild, and its fishing is simply stellar. There's no other place like it.

But, in areas where the Tongass was heavily logged and roaded, the scars persist. Culverts under roads have become impassible waterfalls in many instances. Single-species "dog hair" forests have risen from clear-cut landscapes, offering little in the way of biological diversity or game habitat.

We've done enough damage on the Tongass. It's time to let the forest heal. It's time to let the real economic drivers in the region- fishing and tourism- flourish without the threat of what makes that economy work going away thank to special interests forcing a dying industry down the throats of the people of the region who value America's most productive forest for reasons other than wood pulp and lumber.

As a frequent visitor and an American public lands owner, I ask that the U.S. Forest Service choose the "no action" alternative, and leave the Roadless Rule in place in order to protect the Tongass for the assets it already offers: fishing, recreation and vital carbon storage. I'm appalled at Gov. Dunleavy's heavy-handed approach to this issue- a clear case of a bought-and-paid-for politician doing the bidding of his corporate sponsors.

Don't ruin one of America's great treasures. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Stephen Hunt

Idaho Falls, ID 83404

[Position]