

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

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: HC3046

December 4 , 2019

Re: Roadless Rule,

I support your Alternative 6 that exempts the Tongass National Forest from the 2001 Roadless Rule. To manage the Tongass we already have the Tongass National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

39% of the Tongass is in congressionally designated Wilderness, Monuments and LUD-II areas and will remain such. The Roadless Rule administratively set aside from development 58% of the Tongass. That leaves only 3% of the Tongass for multiple uses.

Under the 2008 Forest Plan, 80% of the Tongass was explicitly restricted from resource development or was required to be managed as roadless areas. 20% of the Tongass was left available for full multiple use planning and management. The changes made in 2016 to the Forest Plan were even more restrictive as the goal is to convert the portion of the Tongass planned for timber harvest from harvesting old growth and second growth to just second growth within 15 years. With the Roadless Rule in place, this has been recognized as impossible.

Conserving habitat and biodiversity are already adequately addressed through the Forest Plan and other laws and regulations. Conserving roadless characteristics is also already adequately addressed with the majority of the Tongass in Wilderness Area and other non-development land use designations.

What is not adequately addressed is support to community and socioeconomic well-being through multiple uses such as renewable hydropower, mining, timber harvest, and other uses requiring road access. Alternative 6 will allow this to be addressed, recognizing that any multiple use must still undergo an environmental review pursuant to the NEPA procedures and must comply with the Forest Plan.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Robert Durland

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[Position]