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Organization:

Title:

Comments: HC3015

I'm Mike Taylor, a Council Member of the City of Gustavus and a former Mayor. I have had a lifelong interest and love for forests. I grew up in a major timber state - Oregon. While in engineering school at Oregon State, I worked summers for the USFS on the Gifford Pinchot National Forest and for Crown Zellerbach Corp on their Tillamook Tree Farm, surveying logging roads and clearcuts. I've since explored and studied forests from Alaska to the tropics.

Gustavus appreciated the opportunity to comment on the Roadless Rule at the scoping meeting held at our Public Library. Many of us expressed our views then and in writing, indicating our strong preferences, grounded in science and broad forest experience, that the 2001 Roadless Rule should remain unchanged for the Tongass. Reflecting that sentiment the Gustavus City Council passed and submitted a resolution calling for keeping the 2001 Roadless Rule for Alaska unchanged.

I don't need to review all the reasons for keeping the Roadless Rule for Alaska. You have posted with your proposal an excellent summary as expressed by thousands of scoping commenters, many with strong professional science qualifications. *The great majority urged the Forest Service to keep the Roadless Rule intact for Alaska.*[Text italicized] But the Forest Service seems to give no weight to the public input it requested.

A fundamental principle of our democracy is that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. [Text bolded for emphasis] The line appears as the second sentence of the Declaration of Independence. We on the Gustavus City Council remind ourselves of this concept frequently. Key actions and proposals are subject to public hearing. Our public lets us know what they think. Sometimes we find that our planned action is not broadly supported by the public and we are obliged to drop it, despite our personal views on the matter. If we do not have the public's consent, we can't do it.

In the first decade of the 20th Century, Gifford Pinchot and President Teddy Roosevelt fought wealthy special interests trying to corner the public's resources for their personal private profit. Pinchot and Roosevelt persevered to establish our national forests for all the people of the United States. The Forests are the property of all Americans and they should determine how they are managed and used.

In 2001, when the National Roadless Rule was subject to national public comment, the public gave its consent and the rule was adopted. In 2019 you have returned to the public proposing to reverse the rule for Alaska. The public is clearly saying "No" !

*My questions for you today are: *[Text bolded for emphasis]

1. Given that the public response to your scoping process was so strongly in favor of a "no action alternative", i.e. keeping the 2001 Roadless Rule intact for Alaska, why does the Forest Service now propose exactly the opposite of what the public owners of the forest directed?

2. Do you not understand that you * do not* [Text underlined for emphasis] have the consent of the governed to do away with the Roadless Rule in Alaska?

[Position]