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Organization:

Title:

Comments: HC5442

U.S. Forest Service Alaska Roadless Rule Committee:

I believe that the move to repeal the "Roadless Rule" in the Tongass National Forest is a move to favor major extraction industries operating on public lands, lands that are some of the most pristine forests in the country. I am a Marine scientist at Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute, so I understand the potential negative impacts on the environment and fish populations of the area (which support a multi-million dollar sport fishing industry). To allow this action would potentially damage native salmon runs and disrupt animal/nutrient industry). To allow this action would potentially damage native salmon runs and disrupt animal/nutrient movement through the landscape, it is proven in numerous scientific studies that building roads through forests has adverse negative effects. Additionally, this rule repeal is being done for the benefit of the logging industry, NOT the benefit of most citizens! Although there are pretenses that boosting logging in this area will boost the local economy and provide jobs, in reality the jobs created will be few and temporary, the major economic benefits will mostly be exported elsewhere along with the logs, and lastly the damage to old growth forests will be detrimental and irreparable. On the other hand, it has been shown that renewable industries such as ecotourism, fishing, and hunting can support a more robust economy with long term employment. Also, the majority of economic benefits will go directly to the local citizens operating these ventures.

Although I may not be from the area I do wish to one day be able to enjoy the pristine wilderness and amazing fisheries it has to offer (I'm an avid fly fisherman), and I'm sure many others share the same sentiment. That is why it is in Alaska's best interest to preserve the pristine wilderness of the Tongass and Chugach National Forest and work with local communities to build sustainable industries based on the renewable use of its resources (logging in this area is NOT renewable). I STRONGLY encourage the use of the "No action" alternative 1, but also the alternative 2 with the most protections kept for watersheds and the smallest amount of logging land opened is the next best choice.

Thanks for taking the time to read my comments,

Sincerely,

Ethan Weber

Fort Pierce, FL 34950

[Position]