Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/17/2023 6:04:56 PM
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Comments: Southeast Alaska, and the Tongass, have the opportunity to let some time start to heal the massive damage done to the Forest and the regional economy by the unsustainable clearcutting that took place for decades, with valuable habitat destroyed to be shipped overseas as round logs and pulp.

Right now in the region, there are not people to fill so many jobs. And, timber sales have not proven profitable, or even break even, for the Forest Service without very creative accounting. So, planning a young-growth sale to export logs is harming options for the future. Let those young growth trees grow longer, and they will be capture carbon, while building more valuable timber, and letting the region better prepare to get maximum value from any trees harvested. In Tenakee, a small-scale logger/sawmill operator/builder who specializes in second growth harvest is going to get certification to be able to grade lumber so that his lumber may be used in home construction projects where building codes apply. The Tongass is growing wealth and opportunity with the second growth on Prince of Wales; large-scale harvest to ship overseas is not in our interests.

You can create jobs and economic opportunity doing thinning and restoration work, which will be paid for with public dollars regardless of the pittance received from a timber contract, so focus efforts, training, and employment on those activities.

Ideally, I would like to see this proposed project entirely scrapped. Barring that, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) should be prepared, the currently proposed Environmental Assessment (EA) is inadequate, and one option in the EIS should be a full focus on long-term sustainability, growing the second-growth for more years, focusing on restoration, habitat, and thinning, with some small-scale logging projects that could be purchased by mom and pop scale businesses that could provide value added on the island, and enough to provide the existing mill on the island for on-island cutting to finished lumber products (not just cant cuts).

A young growth sale that results in round log export is not in line with goals from the Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy (SASS) and isn't in the best interests of Southeast Alaska communities.
Current plans look short on wildlife and restoration priorities in a large project area.