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First name: James

Last name: Mackovjak

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am the author of "Tongass Timber: A History of Logging and Timber Utilization in Southeast Alaska" and have lived in Southeast Alaska for nearly a half-century.

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) must be prepared for the Thorne Bay Basin Integrated Resource Management Project. I have seen first hand the disastrous results of the Forest Service's quick-and-dirty Environmental Assessment process in the Couverden Timber Sale, just east of Gustavus, where I live. There, the Forest Service in the mid-1980s spent over \$5.5 million putting in almost 30 miles of roads and eight bridges in advance of a 55 MMBF timber sale that drew no bidders. When the Forest Service finally found a buyer for the timber (the now-defunct Alaska Pulp Company), its price was reduced to rock-bottom "base rates"-the lowest price for which the Forest Service could legally sell timber, which put its total value at about \$113,000--barely two percent of what the Forest Service had spent building roads. Today, regrowth in the area is poor and the roads are degrading.

I am skeptical of the Forest Service's goal "Make available a variety of potential forest products that support the development of an integrated industry based primarily upon young-growth timber harvest." The potential for developing an integrated forest-products industry in Southeast Alaska is minimal, basically because Southeast Alaska is such an expensive place to operate. Importantly, 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.

Approximately 1.6 million cruise ship passengers visited Juneau in 2023. There people want to see a healthy forest and the wildlife it supports. The Forest Service should prioritize restoration projects and projects that benefit wildlife.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

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