Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/8/2024 10:54:29 PM
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Comments: I do understand that in many parks and wilderness areas, there are people there who owned land before the national designation and those people are grandfathered in. In the case of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) of 1980, there are privately owned cabins that had been built on National Forest lands. So the cabins are privately owned, but they do not own and never have owned the land. It is not the same as the folks who owned and continue to own the land their buildings are on.

It has been a kindness not to tear down the cabins and let people continue to use them for the span of their lives, but there aren't any squatters rights. Once the last original immediate family member has died, the children, grandchildren, great-grands, etc. do not have rights to the land or the cabin. The proposed revision in effect gives rights to squatters who built (or their parents / grandparents built) on public land. The land is still public land even though a private cabin was built on it. It's not fair to take away public land to give that to private individuals.

I do note the provision "so long as there is no direct threat to or significant impairment of the National Forests". But by setting an expectation that the ANILCA cabins can/should be renewed more or less in perpetuity, it takes the burden off the shoulders of the folks that built on public land. Then the monkey ends up on the back of the Forest Service. It's not like the Service needs an extra burden. The proposed revision is not well founded on basic law, but instead is a convenience to those asserting right to public lands. This is not in the general public interest.

Sincerely,
Carla Holder