

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/31/2025 2:27:55 PM

First name: Ashlyn

Last name: Bell

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Forest Supervisor Frank Sherman,

RE: Tongass National Forest Land Management Plan Revision #64039

To begin, I will enter a statement about the Forest Service work/plans and why allowing these protections of public land and national forests in the state to be done away with are wrong and shouldn't be allowed:

I think the Forest Service is heading in the right direction with the draft assessment that highlights Alaskans' interest in the uniqueness of our remote forested island archipelago, the importance of the Forest as homelands to Native Alaskans, for customary and traditional uses, for salmon, and for hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation. These local voices accurately capture the important values that are shaping our region and our economy. I strongly urge the U.S. Forest Service to keep this momentum going and to work with our communities to prioritize fish and wildlife habitat, trails, recreation, and tourism management.

Additionally, the state of Alaska is one of the last wild places in the world. There is an attraction that we see in books by authors and dreamers such as Jack London and individuals like Chris McCandless who rejected modern society. While romanticized, it leaves us to wonder about his psyche and what a life stripped of comfort looks like. Most importantly, however, is listening to the voices of those who have been on the land long before us all. Indigenous communities and their leaders have worked relentlessly to protect the land that has fed, nurtured and offered an endless amount of challenge, growth and peace to them and their ancestors. It would be a shame that after all the chances we've had to do the right thing by protecting the Earth, people and animals, the potential to keep this beautiful sacred land untouched would be, once again, ignored and disregarded for money, power and access to its resources.

There is no planet B. You cannot eat your money when everything burns. There is no freedom on stolen land. If you aren't seeing the correlation between these oppressive governments and their leaders and the climate crisis, I urge you to seek out the information they don't want you to see.

Sincerely,
Ashlyn Bell