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First name: Mary

Last name: Campbell

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to you today regarding a the Tongass Draft Assessment findings

Dear Tongass Plan Revision,

I have been a frequent visitor to Prince of Wales Island to fish for salmon and, while admiring the beauty of the incomparable Alaskan coastline, I am appalled by the many signs of past mismanagement of the Tongass Forest. I am an avid hiker, so during my visits I drove about the Island seeking places to hike and was continually dismayed to observe that the old growth forest that once covered the Island is almost completely destroyed. But devastating as past logging has been, the Forest Service continues in its apparent quest to finish off the old growth on the Island. One magnificent remnant up at the end of a newly graveled logging road was marked for clearcutting. We were certainly the last ones to enjoy this tract before it, too, was converted to board feet for the foreign market.

This needs to stop immediately. No more logging of old growth. No more clearcutting. No more road building. Period. I concur with SEACC's views on logging in the Tongass.

I am writing to express my strong support for maintaining an intact, healthy Tongass National Forest through the upcoming Revision Plan, and for specific components of the draft assessment centered around this goal. A well-preserved Tongass is essential to my way of life and that of my community, sustaining fish, wildlife, and biodiversity. The plan must protect intact land and water resources to ensure long-term ecosystem health, in addition to supporting resilient, thriving cultural resources, economies, and communities in the region.

The draft assessment highlights several priority areas for me personally that are also areas which require robust protection, including:

- Homelands, sacred places, and traditional harvesting grounds of Alaska Native people
- Subsistence - both customary and traditional uses
- The temperate rainforest archipelago and ecosystems
- Salmon runs and other wildlife habitat
- Recreation and scenic beauty

I share in the draft plan's endorsement of stronger protections for these areas and encourage the Forest Service to retain these sections of the plan. I urge the Forest Service to integrate Indigenous Knowledge and subsistence rights into the plan. Traditional Ecological Knowledge strengthens conservation and ensures resilience for future generations. A co-stewardship model for managing the Tongass honors the rights and sovereignty of Tribal Governments.

The inclusion of protections for small timber mill operators is also extremely important to include in the Forest Plan Revision. Small timber mills have helped create and sustain communities across Southeast Alaska but are often outbid, forced out of timber sales that they depend on by larger mills.

Many Southeast Alaskans want to see meaningful change in the timber industry, and the entire region would directly benefit from the transition away from archaic clear cutting to truly sustainable logging practices.

Environmental and profiteering threats could degrade the Tongass, harming ecosystems and communities. The new Tongass Forest Plan must prioritize protections that uphold the integrity of the Tongass's vast ecosystems and align with the draft assessment's findings as well as local knowledge and support for a balanced approach. By doing so, the Forest Service will safeguard the long-term sustainability of this vital forest.

Thank you for considering my input. I urge you to prioritize Tongass protections in this forest plan revision.

Sincerely,

Ms. Mary Campbell