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Organization:

Title:

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

Dear Tongass Plan Revision,

As a 45 year resident of Southeast Alaska living in the Tongass National Forest, I am writing to express my support for maintaining an intact, healthy Tongass National Forest through the new Revision Plan. An intact Tongass is essential to my way of life and that of my family, 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 areas for me personally that are also areas which require full 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 endorse stronger protections for these areas and demand the Forest Service retain these sections of the plan. I urge the Forest Service to integrate Indigenous Knowledge and subsistence rights into the plan.

The inclusion of protections for small timber mill operators is also important to include in the Revision. Small timber mills have helped create and sustain communities across Southeast Alaska.

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

The new Tongass Forest Plan must prioritize protection 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.

Both the USFS and the rest of us must do ALL we can to protect the Tongas from unwise and un-scientific exploitation by the government and private industry. We do not have a good record of doing this for the last 75 years or more. Please remember, there is only one Tongass National Forest in the entire world, if we damage or destroy it, the world will consider us to be a selfish, interested only in temporary monetary profit, not the future for our following generations.

Sincerely,

Mr. Shelley Stallings

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