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First name: Louise

Last name: Champagne

Organization:

Title:

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

Dear Tongass Plan Revision,

I lived in SE Alaska for 30 years before moving to Texas. 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.

I believe 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.

I support the draft plans priorities, namely managing the Tongass to protect & support:

- Salmon runs and other wildlife habitat
- Recreation and scenic beauty for all Americans
- Subsistence harvests, especially traditional harvesting grounds of Alaska Native people

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.

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.

I know for a fact that 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. Louise Champagne