Data Submitted (UTC 11): 5/7/2026 1:14:58 AM
First name: Willa
Last name: Johnson
Organization:
Title:
Comments: Hello,
I live in Sitka, AK and I think a Forest Plan that prioritizes the needs of the communities in the Tongass is very important. Right now I don't think that the draft forest plan prioritizes community needs, especially in respect to the maps included at the end of the plan.

Salmon is crucial to the culture and economy of Southeast Alaska. The Tongass provides critical salmon habitat. For this reason I would recommend that there is a 300 foot buffer around ALL salmon streams to protect the salmon runs and the commercial fisheries that rely on them. Similarly, we know that harvesting old growth lumber in areas near priority fish streams can damage those streams and salmon runs. So I think there should be no old-growth harvest in priority fisheries areas.

As Southeast Alaska residents have expressed time and time again through numerous public comment periods, I support maintaining roadless area protections.

Across the Sound, Mt. Edgecumbe should me maintained as a Special Interest Area. This area is an historically active volcano, important subsistence location, a non-commercial recreation area and so I think it should continue to have this special interest area designation. Additionally, I strongly disagree with the categorization of Shoals Point as a high use commercial recreation area in the draft forest plan. That is just not what is happening there. Instead it is important habitat for herring and all the many animals that feed on them. Shoals Point should be removed as a high use commercial recreation area.

From reading this plan I was confused about the fisheries designated areas. This plan should not be confusing. It needs to have clear and accurate fisheries designations in different areas. Fisheries are so important to Southeast Alaska and that should be considered a priority.

Finally, across this plan it is important to prioritize subsistence use areas and wildlife habitat. Subsistence foods are essential to provide affordable and healthy food options in rural communities across the Tongass. Additionally, both residents and visitors enjoy viewing wildlife in this ecosystem and healthy animal populations are important for healthy habitats and healthy people. For those reasons wildlife habitat should be prioritized across this new Forest Plan.

Thank you for your time and I sincerely hope that you incorporate this and all the public feedback you receive into the forest plan.
Sincerely,
Willa Johnson