

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 5/7/2026 5:32:55 AM

First name: Caroline

Last name: Hodur

Organization:

Title:

Comments: The changes proposed at recent SEAK meetings are significant and shocking. Residents are being asked to react in a matter of days regarding what appears on paper to be utter destruction of some of our most prized, iconic assets in the Tongass. Areas that offer zero commercial value to tourism are being recommended for high commercial rezoning. These changes are not random. They are with purpose or by design, which means someone is pushing these changes for a specific purpose. When almost 50% of Kruzof is earmarked for high commercial activity, there can be only a few possible reasons - timber, mining or data centers.

The forest service representatives have provided no justification for the changes other than increased tourism. Even the areas that tourists may have access to are public lands that the local citizens have used for recreational activity without ANY destruction to the natural beauty of the land are extremely large - moving well into areas that are nowhere near the basic paths that are needed to explore the land.

Absolutely NO environmental impact studies, particularly those pertaining to highly protected species such as coastal brown bears or bald eagles or salmon have been offered. Kruzof, particularly the southern areas, serve as feeding grounds for the protected bird species that call St Lazaria National Island home; no impact studies have been presented. The waste that high commercial activities is not assessed nor are there plans to fund or even effect proper disposal of all waste streams. There are no plans to control pollution which would most certainly impact some of our most important resources: our fish in the waters around this enormous area that would suddenly be impacted. No plan to supply utilities was provided. No plan to maintain utilities was provided. And, sadly, absolutely no plan explaining how a reduced forest service force that is already incapable of enforcing regulations in areas dedicated for commercial use will manage this immense increase in re-zoned lands.

Just a map carved up like it's only value is what human beings can use to turn a few dollars profit in a moment, while leaving horrific devastation in its wake.

Visit ANY deforested area ANYWHERE in the usa, and tell my the land can still support the life it once did. (You can't.) Is this the legacy we leave the next generation?

This entire process is progressing at a speed that does not reflect the potentially catastrophic impact to the environment or protected species that call it home. It canabalizes many places sacred to Sitkans including the breath taking iris fields and our prized North and South Beach cabins. It even allows high commercial use of our trail to Edgecumbe rim.

And as far as we have been told, these decisions that affect thousands of locals and hundreds of thousands of visitors are being made by a handful of forest service representatives, many who do not even live here.

I urge you to slow this process and, as the stewards you committed to be for the environment, carefully conduct impartial impact studies before making what seem to be decisions that will not just negatively impact our environment, but work towards the destruction of the very things that make Alaska so amazing.

You will NEVER recover what you lose. Once it is destroyed, it is gone forever. Don't you think such impactful decisions deserve more consideration?