

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/8/2026 4:44:21 PM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I cannot support the loss of approximately 1700 acres of old growth from the already heavily harvested Project area. I fully support a viable timber industry focused on young growth harvest and manufacturing. This industry is needed to maintain the infrastructure across the Tongass and to maintain the equipment and expertise to harvest timber. I do not support export of the young growth timber; I do support local manufacturing in local facilities. It is my hope that a young growth-based industry and manufacturing facilities can be maintained and grow in Southeast Alaska. I do support the limited harvest of old growth to maintain the current volume of timber needed for processing at specialty mills. 3. There are conservatively over 790,000 acres of young growth on Federal, State, and Private lands, much of which no longer provides deer forage across Southeast Alaska, some in stem-exclusion stage and some approaching that. I support some combination of clear-cut harvest and wildlife commercial thinning to create a mosaic across the landscape. We support habitat thinning prescriptions that remove the slash from the forest, possibly yarding whole trees to a landing where processing heads can access the logs. I do not support the continued large-scale harvest of old growth, mature forest, which further fragments and reduces deer habitat, especially deer winter range and their access to it. I support habitat thinning and treatments adjacent to open roads that will not only create forage for deer but make those deer accessible for hunting. I support opening existing closed and brushed in roads, making them resilient to the now more frequent atmospheric river events, and where possible leaving these roads open for subsistence and hunting access and access for future continued habitat thinning. I support utilization of non-merchantable timber and slash for biomass and cord wood production. Biomass in the form of compressed wood products, i.e. BioBricks, pressed logs, wood pellets, and/or wood chips. We would like to see small diameter non-merchantable logs made available to communities for firewood.

You state that, "Both action alternatives would reduce deer model habitat capability, elevational connectivity, and important winter habitat during heavy snow accumulation (deep snow habitat). The effects would occur immediately after even-aged management (stand initiation) and intensify at 25 to 30 years as the harvested stands transition into the stem-exclusion stage. Reductions in habitat capability and deep snow habitat could lead to a decline in the deer population, particularly following severe winters within the project area." You further state in reference to subsistence that "Based on that evaluation, the direct, indirect effects, and cumulative effects of both action alternatives of the Twin Mountain II project present a significant possibility of a significant restriction of subsistence uses on deer due to changes in abundance, distribution, and competition." How does this meet your mandate to provide for subsistence opportunities for Prince of Wales Island? The Tongass National Forest operates under the federal subsistence mandate outlined in Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). The proposed actions do not reach this mandate. Currently people on Prince of Wales and in Unit 2 are not finding the deer they need for subsistence. Take a look at recent actions by the Federal Subsistence Board! I urge you to seriously consider the outcome of your proposed activities on the deer abundance in Unit 2.

1. I support the No Action Alternative, nor further reducing the Old Growth Habitat on the Island.
2. I urge you to consider the needs of Sitka Black-tailed deer, winter range habitat and access to that habitat given the fragmented nature of the landscape due to past activity.
3. I urge you to transition to a young growth based harvest, a harvest with a combination of clear-cut harvest and wildlife commercial thinning to create a mosaic across the landscape.
4. I support opening existing closed and brushed in roads, making them resilient to the now more frequent atmospheric river events, and where possible leaving these roads open for subsistence and hunting access and access for future continued habitat thinning.
5. I support utilization of non-merchantable timber and slash for biomass and cord wood production.

This administration I am sure has given you marching orders for resource extraction. Great! Harvest young growth and not Old Growth to meet those requirements.

Thank you.