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First name: Jake
Last name: McKeown
Organization:
Title:
Comments: See attached file(s)

The following text was copy/pasted from an attached letter. The system cannot display the formatting, graphics, or tables from the attached original.

To the USDA,

This is not a smart environmental decision to make because there could be huge consequences to opening up the Tongass National Forest to logging. There are so many things that will be affected if logging and development is allowed in this place. One thing affected will be the wildlife that calls the forest its home. Deer, moose, black and brown bears, grouse are just some animals that will be forced to change their habits and adapt to these new influences. They may have to travel further to be able to find good food and clean water. Another thing that could be affected are the rivers and streams that no doubt run through it. The trees forces rivers and streams to meander and this helps slow down the current, but if 9.2 million acres of trees are clear cut, that could have major impacts on the rivers. It could allow them to begin to channelize and become straighter, thus speeding up the current. This could then impact how these rivers and streams flood since they are in a temperate rainforest. Another impact is the mycorrhizal networks that connect all of the plant life to each other. If that many trees are removed, I will throw the entire ecosystem out of wack as over half of the things that help the ecosystem function are completely removed. It will cause nutrients to move slower between plants, which in turn will cause them to not grow as quickly or as big as they once were. This is why the majority of the Tongass National Forest should be left untouched. If there are plots of a couple acres that have some trees taken out, that[rsquo]s ok, because, for the most part, the ecosystem will be able to handle that work through or around it. But if over HALF of the forest is taken out, there is almost no way that the ecosystem could bounce back from that and recover. And replanting trees once they[rsquo]re removed won[rsquo]t work either as it will take DECADES for those new trees to grow and reach the same level that the old ones were at. We have already screwed up so much of the Earth and its biomes and ecosystems through just trying to support the growing population. There has to be other solutions to building homes other than cutting down over half of the trees in the largest temperate rainforest in the world. These biomes are already rare enough as is, only being found in 20 countries, and only in places that receive enough precipitation and have the right climate for deciduous trees to grow. This is why it needs to be protected as there isn[rsquo]t a lot to begin with. I love being able to go outdoors in these kinds of places and hike and see what God has created. By allowing loggers and construction to come in an destroy it, would ruin experiences for generations of people that enjoy being able to visit these places.

From,

Jake McKeown

[Position]

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