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Organization: City and Borough of Wrangell
Title: Borough Manager
Comments: Please see attached letter and resolution.

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

December 13, 2019

USDA Forest Service

Attn: Alaska Roadless Rule

P.O. Box 21628

Juneau, Alaska, 99802

Email: akroadlessrule@fs.fed.us

Re: City and Borough of Wrangell comments on the Draft EIS Rulemaking for Alaska Roadless Area

Dear USFS:

Attached please find a Resolution in support of the preferred Alternative 6 of the Draft EIS Rulemaking for Alaska Roadless Area. The Wrangell Borough Assembly also requests that the USFS hold community education workshops in Wrangell, and any other interested community, regarding the current protections in place within each Land Use Designation of the Tongass Land Management Plan, especially in those areas that are proposed for exemption. Below are a number of issues the Wrangell Borough Assembly is concerned about and want addressed in whatever Alternative, or variation of alternative, is selected as the Final Decision.

The Wrangell Borough Assembly wants to ensure that there is flexibility and future opportunity for transportation corridors, utility infrastructure, and other business endeavors in the Tongass National Forest. The Assembly supports the existing protections within the Tongass Land Management Plan and wants to see the continued transition to harvesting of young growth timber in order to protect wildlife corridors and unique habitats. The Borough supports removal of the roaded roadless areas to allow long term continued access, multiple uses and road maintenance to areas already being used for small sales, subsistence and recreation.

The Wrangell Borough Assembly is interested in being able to maintain current, and construct potential future transportation corridors (e.g. a road to Fool's Inlet on the south end of Wrangell Island should a ferry system creating day-runs actually ever materialize). Some of these corridors have been reserved by the State of Alaska Department of Transportation, but in the future, a need or connection might be necessary that is currently unplanned or reserved. Keeping options available is critical to future growth and opportunities. Known and unknown utility corridors are also of interest. Regional energy solutions including wind and hydro (e.g. Sunrise Lake) could show tremendous benefits. And while the Committee recognized that

there are additional regulations that might still permit some of these activities, significant concerns still exist that a permit may not be authorized. Further, lack of easily accessible interpretation about what can be permitted creates support for maintaining opportunities and utilizing existing forest plans to provide environmental protection and allow diversity of opportunities. The Assembly supports maximum flexibility to address future community needs such as energy, mining, community water supply, uplands support of aquaculture and mariculture projects, transportation links, access for commercial and personal recreation, and other economic development opportunities which could be hindered by the continued roadless designation.

The Wrangell Borough Assembly desires environmental protections for critical areas, while enhancing future access and opportunities. The Borough requests the USFS provide community workshops regarding how the current Tongass Land Management Plan protects the critical areas that Wrangellites are concerned about, so the public has a better understanding of the provisions that are in place without the need to designate roadless areas.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Lisa Von Barga Borough Manager

CITY AND BOROUGH OF WRANGELL
RESOLUTION NO, 12-194503

A RESOLUTION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF WRANGELL, ALASKA,
SUPPORTING ROADLESS RULE ALTERNATIVE SIX (6)

WHEREAS, 97% of the land within the City & Borough of Wrangell is within the Tongass National Forest;
and

WHEREAS, the US Forest Service Draft Environmental Impact Statement Rulemaking for Alaska Roadless Areas includes six alternatives; and

WHEREAS, the US Department of Agriculture Preferred Alternative is Alternative Six, complete exemption of the Tongass from the Roadless Rule; and

WHEREAS, Alternative Six provides the most leeway for future unknown opportunities within the Tongass National Forest; and

WHEREAS, the Tongass Land Management Plan and Land Use Designations (LUDs) provide adequate protection for the forest, preventing the redevelopment of large-scale timber harvesting in the Forest; and

WHEREAS, education about the Forest Plan, LUDs and other rules guiding forest management is the most important way for the public to understand the potential impacts to, and protections of, the Tongass

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF WRANGELL, ALASKA, THAT:

Section 1. The Assembly of the City & Borough of Wrangell, Alaska supports Roadless Rule Alternative Six (6).

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE CITY 7 BOROUGH OF WRANGELL, ALASKA THIS
10TH DAY OF DECEMBER 2019

[Position]