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First name: Janet

Last name: Kussart

Organization:

Title:

Official Representative/Member Indicator:

Address1: 425 Kennedy St

Address2:

City: Juneau

State: AK

Province/Region:

Zip/Postal Code: 99801

Country: United States

Email: kussartdonjan@msn.com

Phone: 907 586 6457

Comments:

Hello,

The following are why we need to keep the Roadless Rule

*This process needs to be kept open and transparent to the public so the Forest Service needs to make sure everyone is notified as to how to comment and testify;

*The Roadless Rule keeps the Tongass intact and healthy by preventing wasteful and unnecessary logging roads that fragment the forest while allowing needed roads, like highways that connect communities, road access to mining claims, and logging incidental to otherwise permitted activities, like utility corridors and hydropower projects;

*Since its adoption in 2001, the Roadless Rule has maintained the resiliency of our intact forests, provided key habitat for abundant wildlife, and safeguarded Southeast Alaska's salmon runs and the subsistence, commercial, and sport uses they support;

*Building roads on these remote and rugged lands comes at tremendous cost to U.S. taxpayers but benefits less than one percent of Southeast Alaska's economy;

*The protection of old-growth forests is essential for our region's tourism, recreation, and fishing industries;

*The Tongass timber industry has been in a state of decline primarily because of permanent and fundamental changes in global timber markets, high labor costs, and far distance from markets, and;

*The Roadless Rule's commonsense restrictions only restrict building roads for logging, not projects like mining, highways, or hydropower development.