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Comments:

I depend on the Tongass for the subsistence resources of salmon and deer and have been for many years.

The Roadless Rule was adopted nationwide because of the taxpayer waste of building roads and their proliferation into the National Forests. Many reasons from fiscal responsibility to biological diversity to protection of resources went into the creation of this policy rule. Many uses of the forests were protected for the continued allowance of traditional activities and community needs. The main focus was to prevent the further fragmentation of intact swaths of forest while still allowing forestry practices to take place.

In the time since the Roadless Rule was implemented, many acres of the Tongass have been saved from subsidized road building. The absence of roads means intact watersheds and protected fish and game habitat, all of which support healthy subsistence and sport fishing/hunting.

The Rule came at a time in which the timber industry was heavily reliant on subsidies to keep it afloat, mainly through road building. Currently, our nation has few financial reasons to keep funding this declining industry who cannot keep itself functional on its own due to larger global forces. We need to be asking ourselves just why is it so important that taxpayers should start once again paying for the building of roads to only benefit a few employees. Nationwide forests are suffering from fire and disease. Shouldn't we be conserving our resources for the purposes of dampening the effects of climate change?

The Forest Service must keep this process transparent and open - the public must be able to attend meetings held by both the Forest Service and the State, and notes must be made available for our collective review.

Thank you,
Anissa Berry