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Comments:

"The Tongass is the country's largest national forest-and home to nearly one-third of all old-growth temperate rainforest remaining in the entire world, and is prime habitat for wolves, specifically the Alexander Archipelago wolf, and their prey, the Sitka black-tailed deer. The Tongass old-growth forests provide ideal nesting habitat for the Queen Charlotte Goshawk, an endemic rainforest raptor that lives in coastal British Columbia and Southeast Alaska. The old-growth trees within Tongass roadless areas provide necessary shade for salmon streams.

The Tongass and the Chugach play a vital role in capturing excess carbon from the atmosphere and mitigating some of the impact of global warming, as well as providing ecosystems services that reach beyond Alaska.

The wildlands of these forests are a treasured natural resource that should be valued and protected from the destruction of logging. Changing or repealing this rule will lead to nothing but environmental degradation in these vital forest ecosystems. The Tongass has already lost at least half of its old growth forest since the 1950s, due to scorched-earth logging practices that utilized a technique of clear cutting full forest areas. Large areas that were clearcut are slowly growing back into dense thickets of young trees that are nearly impenetrable to wildlife. Old logging roads fall into disrepair, filling salmon streams with erosion and blocking the way for fish."

Do not gut forest protections to allow logging of old-growth in wild roadless areas of the Tongass National Forest.