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Comments:

I am writing today in support of keeping the Roadless Rule on the Tongass here in Alaska.

The Tongass National Forest is an integral part of our life and economy here in Southeast and to roll back or repeal these protections would endanger our livelihoods here in Southeast. A healthy Tongass means healthy salmon streams and a strong tourism economy. Where timber represents less than one percent of our economy, tourism and fishing represent over 20. Both would be harmed by the industrial scale clearcut logging which would be facilitated by repealing the Roadless Rule here.

I am originally from Washington State where timber was once an economic driver, just like Southeast. It was a difficult transition away from timber but one that was necessary. Not only were we destroying our environment, endangering and extinguishing our wildlife, and creating great eyesores not conducive to recreation/tourism, but we were swiftly eliminating even the potential for jobs! Our old-growth trees are not a renewable resource. Allowing for this flagrant misuse of our resources will only help a very small number of people for a short time, leaving us with land stripped of its beauty and utility and compromising the long-term economic stability of our region. What we must do is safeguard our established industries (again, tourism and fishing) while looking for alternative industries that can provide stability for our region and people.

I find it beyond frustrating to hear the continued lies that the Roadless Rule blocks projects like roads for hydro projects and interties. This is simply false. We have seen numerous projects go through, including mines.

As a taxpayer, I am also disgusted by the waste in taxpayer dollars that are being spent on these roads. This administration talks about fiscal responsibility and yet what are we seeing, an increase across the board of spending! Why are we subsidizing this industry to the tune of MILLIONS of dollars each year? To eek out the last small amount of cents from the trees makes no sense. On North Kuiu alone the FS spent \$3 million on roads only to see no return, even when promising the ability to export most of the logs to China, creating even fewer local jobs.

Not only do I care about this place, but I use it. I love hiking and skiing throughout the forest in places like Berners Bay here near Juneau. I also know numerous people who use these inventoried roadless areas to get out and enjoy this land, a place unique in the world for what it has to offer. We must do everything that we can to protect the forest and protect what we love, Southeast Alaska.

Thank you for your time and consideration.