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Comments:

US Forest Service

To whom it concerns;

We should not repeal the Roadless Rule on the Tongass National Forest! On north Kuiu Island in 2016, the USFS contracted and built several miles of road and replaced bridges, for a sale that received zero bids and was approved for 100% foreign export in the round. I do not feel that taxpayer resources should go to build roads for the timber and mining industry. I believe the logging industry is not willing to participate or work with other users on the Forest. By not participating they will create greater user conflicts on the Forest both with existing permitted operations and the public. Since the 2017 USFS Shoreline II ROD, industries ranging from the small ship cruise operators to Hunting operations to Fishing operations have undergone extensive dialog to reduce conflicts on the forest. Opening up Roadless areas will negatively impact the work of these user groups and USFS staff.

One way the USFS can help to create economic growth in Southeast would be to focus on trails and Large Group Areas in the region. Developing these sites allows for large and small operations from the small bush communities to towns like Juneau, Sitka and Petersburg to provide a wide range of activities to the public. Having the Tongass with World Class Trails System would create diversity and keep visitors in the area longer. If the USFS is willing to spend 1 million dollars per mile of taxpayer money to build a road for the timber industry, then the USFS should match that spending in recreational trails and sites. Timber and Mining companies must build the infrastructure and contribute that infrastructure back to the U.S. Government and the citizens as they profited from a public resource.

Wildlife resources and the public will be negatively impacted by loggers. A fragile balance is currently in place and placing 30-75 loggers on an island can drive ADF&G harvest levels for deer and bear up, impacting the native subsistence user, residents and the guided hunter.

If roadless areas need to be opened, then keep the new uses to Prince Of Wales Island where Viking Lumber and Native corporations are already set up in this area. The USFS needs to encourage these companies to transition to second generation timber harvest. The USFS needs to factor in the cost of thinning these cuts when sales are being offered. USFS offers thinning contracts on 25 and 50 year old cuts, costing the tax payer up to \$4,000 an Acre each time a cut is thinned. These thinning contracts cost the tax payer billions of dollars to help grow trees after the timber company is long gone. This is simply not fair to the public!

Thank you,
Zach Decker
Glacier Bay Alaska