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Comments:

Roadless Rule comments

\* Comments regarding the Alaska Roadless Rule

I support conserving roadless areas in the Tongass National Forest. The more economically successful industries in Southeast, including mining, tourism, and fisheries, appear to be able to develop within the framework of the roadless rules. However, it is no secret that relaxing roadless area controls has as a major focus the increased development of major industrial timber production, particularly involving old growth timber. The question is: why is this being rushed through? The Issues were basically settled. History and economic analysis point to the fact that building new roads for major timber developments in Southeast Alaska will never pay back the value of the public investment. The timber companies may do well, but the taxpayer will be left holding the bag.

Moreover, I believe that this increased timber production will inevitably interfere with and compromise other industries, especially tourism and fishing. While temporary subsidies can help develop a new industry or get an existing one through a rough patch, increased timber development in roadless areas will likely require subsidies through the life of the project that will exceed any of the proceeds of the project.

In any case, I am particularly concerned about the areas that my wife and I have the most contact with: Lynn Canal, Stevens Passage and their surrounding watersheds (e.g., Berners Bay, Eagle/Herbert Rivers, Taku River, etc.). The remaining stands of old growth timber need some protection, before they are completely mined out.

Thank you,

Thomas J Lane

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