

Date submitted (Alaskan Standard Time): 10/15/2018 12:00:00 AM

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Comments:

I strongly object to your plans to reduce and remove protections from roadless areas on the Tongass National Forest. The Tongass contains the last remaining old-growth temperate rainforest in North America where old-growth logging still occurs, and its value in providing clean water and fish and wildlife habitat is essential to the economic and ecological health of Southeast Alaska. I urge you to keep the federal Roadless Rule intact and current protections in place for national forests in Alaska.

The Roadless Rule is one of the smartest and most popular land management policies the Federal Government has ever adopted. Not only does it preserve some of Americas best fish and wildlife habitat, but it also saves untold millions of taxpayer dollars that might otherwise be spent to subsidize money-losing timber sales.

The value of the Roadless Rule in preventing environmentally damaging and economically wasteful road-building and logging is particularly important in the Tongass, where logging costs vastly exceed timber revenues and require unconscionable taxpayer subsidies.

It is vital that the Federal Government disclose the economics of timber harvest on the Tongass, the cost of associated road-building, and the loss to taxpayers in the environmental analysis for this proposal. The federal Roadless Rule should remain in place in Alaska, and all current roadless areas in the state should remain protected.