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Organization:

Title:

Comments:

I strongly support the action to exempt Alaska from the Roadless Rule. I lived in Ketchikan for nearly 6 years in the late 1990s and was a heavy user of the Tongass. I have been all over the Tongass: by small boat, by float plane, by ferry, and by vehicle on many trips on POW Island.

Roads are a good thing. They provide access and are the great equalizer in making public lands available to the masses. Alaska - and the Tongass in particular - has many places that are protected in conservation system units, prohibiting roads, such as wilderness areas and national parks. I'm good with that. We should have some places that remain intact. But for other places, roads absolutely should be considered as a ways to provide better access for both recreational and economic development.

Roads are particularly critical in the Tongass. For timber, energy development and recreation it is imperative that we have reasonable access. POW is a sportsmen's mecca because it has roads. Roads are good. Roads can be constructed and maintained in a way that is environmentally sound.

In closing, I applaud the Forest Service for implementing an exemption to the roadless rule in Alaska. It's a "good start" and I'd to see the rollback in other places.

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