

Date submitted (Alaskan Standard Time): 12/17/2019 10:03:07 AM

First name: Blaine

Last name: Limberg

Organization:

Title:

Comments:

My name is Blaine Limberg and I live in Deming, WA. Never have been but I have read about it and I feel it is a very important place to leave untouched. Most of the planet has been abused for someone to make money and there is no reason to take away this special forest. I am writing a comment on the Alaska Roadless Rule DEIS because I am concerned with how the Rule and the proposed full exemption will impact my subsistence harvesting, foraging for wild foods, the peace and solitude I find in nature, the forest's ability to sequester carbon and mitigate climate change impacts, the conservation of resources for future generations the status of the Tongass as a national and global treasure, practicing my culture, recreating.

Out of the alternatives described in the AKRR DEIS I support alternative 2: open up roadless. It protects important fish and wildlife habitat from clearcutting and roadbuilding. I depend on roadless areas in the Tongass National Forest for healthy fish habitat, foraging and gathering wild foods, viewing wildlife, carbon sequestration and local climate change mitigation, keeping public lands wild for future generations, recreating and enjoying nature. A full exemption does not protect these values, nor does it effectively balance economic development and conservation of roadless area characteristics. A full exemption from the Roadless Rule and increased logging and roadbuilding will negatively impact the Tongass and what I and many others use and depend on the forest to provide for us.

The Roadless areas on the Tongass that are especially important to me are those on or around all of the inventoried roadless areas on the Tongass. I want the roadless areas in these locations to stay in roadless status in any alternative selected by the Forest Service, and be managed to provide for the uses and activities I listed above. It is important to me that the T77 and the TNC conservation priority areas retain their roadless protections.

I do not support the Forest Services preferred alternative of a full exemption. A full exemption is not in the interests of Southeast Alaskans who live in and use the Tongass National Forest, because I think the forest should be left alone because it's one of the last areas of its kind. The State of Alaska says that a full exemption is needed for rural economic development opportunities. However, a full exemption would not help create more rural economic development opportunities, it would instead harm our existing rural economies that are based on the visitor industry and commercial fishing industry.

It would further harm rural economic opportunities because pursuing the same outdated economic model of old growth clearcut harvesting for export stifles innovation and possibility in other sectors, such as mariculture, sustainable young growth harvest, and rural agriculture. If the Forest Service wants to support rural economic development, they should devote resources to support our fishing and visitor industries improve and streamline existing permitting processes for important community projects rather than rehashing old conflicts.

Greed will ruin this planet for no real reason and more people need to understand that.

I urge the Forest Service to prioritize the voices of Southeast Alaskans over those of our political representation and corporate interests. Choosing a full exemption will not create a long lasting, durable solution for roadless areas on the Tongass. It will only increase the legal challenges, uncertainty for businesses, and conflict on the Tongass going forward.