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Organization:

Title:

Comments:

Please leave the Tongass National Forest alone. The 9.2 million acres needs to be protected. Please select the "no-action" alternative on the Alaska-specific Roadless Rule and protect all inventoried roadless areas on the Tongass National Forest under the 2001 National Roadless Rule.

As a believer of science and the profound impact that climate change is already inflicting on this planet we all call home, I see the no-action alternative (Alternative 1) as the only option that provides our younger generations, including my own, with a life that is even remotely recognizable.

To put it into perspective, according to an October 22, 2019 article by the Scientific American, "the Tongass is among the world's best carbon sinks, and it's one of the largest unfragmented ecosystems in North America. Its trees hold about 650 million tons of carbon, which roughly converts to half of U.S. carbon dioxide emissions in 2017." In other words, every last branch of Sitka Spruce counts.

In addition to the cultural significance of the Tongass to indigenous peoples whose ancestors have existed here for 10,000 or more years, the long-term ecological services the Tongass will continue to provide by leaving its environments unhindered, including the sequestration of greenhouse gases and the provision of crucial habitats for a vast array of wildlife including Salmon, heavily outweighs the short-term economic benefits of resource extraction and its fallout thereafter.

Lastly, the 2001 National Roadless Rule is well designed and flexible enough to allow for access and development projects. Since 2009 48 projects have been approved in the Tongass, the majority relating to surface exploration of potential mining and hydropower. The USFS has also taken steps to expedite this approval process, now taking only one to three weeks for the Tongass National Forest.

For these reasons, again, I strongly urge you to select the "no-action" alternative on the Alaska-specific Roadless Rule and keep the 2001 National Roadless Rule on the Tongass.

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