

Date submitted (Alaskan Standard Time): 12/15/2019 12:00:00 AM

First name: Dave

Last name: Hanna

Organization:

Title:

Comments:

I am writing in favor of repealing the roadless rule. My family has worked and done business in Southeast Alaska since 1880 and in my 44 years of being in business I have watched the many many changes in the regulation of our resources. Most of them have been for the better but some have been devastating. The WOTUS rules stand out and the roadless rule could be just as stifling.

As a local watershed partnership founder and regular participant in restoration projects I feel that I appreciate the protection of our resources as well as anyone. I also realize that blanket rules developed for stateside forests are not applicable here. We have many communities isolated in the middle of the Tongass that need access. We have a failing ferry system that will need to be pared back and augmented by an expanded road system. Proponents of keeping the roadless rule assure us that responsible common sense approaches to good projects will assure us of being able to construct them. I do not believe this.

An example of why we cannot rely on sensible application of restrictions would be the Wilderness Area restrictions. In the Tongass we have Wilderness Areas where no mechanized uses are allowed. The intent was to ensure a wilderness experience for those venturing there. Unfortunately the rules are so strict that no one, not contracted employees working on government projects, nor even USFS personnel are allowed to use so much as a cordless drill in these areas. We have USFS contractors and personnel out there using hand saws, hand drills, mixing concrete with a shovel in a wheel barrow and packing materials in by hand because we can't even prefab these projects and bring them in by helicopter. These projects are costing the taxpayer hundreds of thousands of dollars instead of thousands of dollars. And some projects go undone and cabins and other facilities abandoned because these type of maintenance costs are simply too high.

No, we cannot rely on common sense to prevail when we have restrictions like these. Please repeal the roadless rule and use the other good tools you have to ensure responsible use of our forest.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

[Position]

[Position]