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First name: Andrew

Last name: Chione

Organization:

Title:

Comments:

I am a fisheries biologist in Oregon who spends over 200 days per year on public land working, fishing, and foraging. I come from a family that traveled the Oregon Trail, took unceded land from indigenous tribes, and made their living farming, ranching, logging, and dam building. Unsustainable practices led to the destruction of most of the fish and wildlife habitat in Oregon. Today, the salmon runs are dwindling, with many of them extinct, water quality is impaired in most waterways, and the quality of life of indigenous tribes and the descendants of settlers is degraded.

Most of the old growth forest in Oregon was logged and roads built everywhere. The subsequent degradation of salmon streams and wildlife habitat has been catastrophic. The U.S. Forest Service in Oregon subsidized logging most of the old growth forest on public lands and has since been spending an enormous amount of taxpayer money to repair the damage. Unfortunately, the damage has been done and most of what we lost in Oregon will never come back. My career is focused on fixing the wrongs of the past and slowing the decline of fish and wildlife species. Alaska is the last, best place where pristine salmon streams and old growth forests drive sustainable commercial and sustenance harvest of fish and wildlife.

It is imperative that you select Alternative 1, the no action alternative, for the final decision on the Alaska Roadless Rule. Do not repeat the destruction of cultural, economic, and environmental quality that has happened in Oregon.

As scientists, you have hopefully heard about climate change. The Tongass and Chugach National Forests are the largest intact temperate rainforests in the world and their ability to store carbon should not be compromised. The thousands of miles of roads that are built with the money of American taxpayers do not give most citizens a single benefit, but rather destroy the public trust through the destruction of primary forest and erosion and blockage of waterways. Once old growth forest is gone, it takes hundreds of years to return, along with all of its benefits. Do not clearcut and pave the future of our children for a handful of unsustainable jobs today. Support sustainable commercial and sustenance hunting and fishing, cultural resources, and tourism. Preserve the most important and publicly supported values of the crown jewel of our public lands system.

[Position]