

Date submitted (Alaskan Standard Time): 12/17/2019 12:00:00 AM

First name: Bev

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Organization:

Title:

Comments:

Alaska Roadless Rule Comment

Dear USFS,

I URGE you to take Alternative 1: TAKE NO ACTION and leave all of Alaska under the 2001 Roadless Rule, including Tongass National Forest. That is, UPHOLD THE NATIONAL ROADLESS AREA RULE THAT PROTECTS THE TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST.

Rolling back the roadless rule would remove protections on more than 9 million acres of the 16.7 million-acre Tongass, which accounts for ~40% of the remaining intact forest area managed by the FS. These landscapes are unfragmented areas large enough to maintain biological diversity and support healthy habitats for native wildlife.

Importantly, my research has shown that trees in these forests have a remarkable capacity to store vast amounts of carbon, keeping it out of the atmosphere and mitigating climate change. The trees have stored carbon there for hundreds of years and are counteracting increased fossil fuel emissions. The Tongass holds 8 percent of all carbon stored in U.S. national forests, a service that would be jeopardized if logging resumed in the protected areas.

Sincerely,

Dr. Beverly E. Law

Professor, Global Change Biology & Terrestrial Systems Science

[Position]