

**Petersburg Borough, Alaska  
RESOLUTION #2019-14**

**A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR ALTERNATIVE 1 (NO ACTION  
ALTERNATIVE) OF THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR  
THE MANAGEMENT OF INVENTORIED ROADLESS AREAS WITHIN THE  
TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST**

**WHEREAS**, the commercial fishing and tourism industries are the economic backbone of the Petersburg Borough; and

**WHEREAS**, commercial, charter and sport/subsistence fishing and the tourism industry in Petersburg all depend on maintaining our pristine waters and wild landscapes of the coastal temperate rainforest we call home; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2001, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) finalized a management plan for the Tongass National Forest, which includes the National Roadless Area Conservation Rule (Roadless Rule) in response to disappearing wildlands and a road maintenance backlog of \$8.4 billion; and

**WHEREAS**, the intent of the Roadless Rule was to protect the social, economic, and ecological values and characteristics of inventoried roadless areas from road construction and reconstruction and certain timber harvest activities; and

**WHEREAS**, inventoried roadless areas provide large, relatively undisturbed blocks of important habitat for a variety of terrestrial and aquatic wildlife and plants, and contribute to healthy watersheds and clean drinking water; and

**WHEREAS**, roadless areas support subsistence lifestyles through hunting and fishing, and support outdoor recreation and tourism industries; and

**WHEREAS**, the Roadless Rule protects some of the last remaining tracts of old-growth forest habitat in the Tongass that contribute to the absorption of carbon pollution caused by climate disruption; and

**WHEREAS**, the Roadless Rule contains a variety of exceptions that allow roadbuilding for community access, hydropower projects, utility connectors and other economic development projects when they serve a legitimate public interest; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2018, the State of Alaska petitioned the USDA to craft a state-specific roadless rule, requesting a full exemption from the rule for Alaska; and

**WHEREAS**, the USDA accepted the State of Alaska's petition and initiated a National Environmental Policy Act review, an environmental impact statement (EIS), and public rulemaking process to address the management of inventoried roadless areas within Alaska, and to evaluate the exemption set forth in the petition; and

**WHEREAS**, the majority of comments received by the USDA following its notice of intent of proposed rulemaking opposed changing the Roadless Rule for Alaska; and

**WHEREAS**, the draft EIS provides an analysis of six alternatives related to roadless management in Alaska, ranging from no action to a full exemption from the Roadless Rule on the Tongass National Forest; and

**WHEREAS**, the USDA has identified Alternative 6, which is a full exemption, as the preferred alternative at this time; and

**WHEREAS**, the Petersburg Borough Assembly opposes Alternative 6 and asserts that Alternative 1, which requests no action and would maintain the 2001 Roadless Rule on the Tongass National Forest, best protects public interests.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Petersburg Borough Assembly expresses its opposition to Alternative 6 and its support for Alternative 1 of the draft environmental impact statement for the management of inventoried roadless areas within the Tongass National Forest.

**Passed and approved by the Petersburg Borough Assembly on December 2, 2019**

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**Mark Jensen, Mayor**

**Attest:**

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**Debra Thompson, Clerk**