

Debra Thompson

From: Max Worhatch <mnmnwiv60@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 11, 2019 5:41 AM
To: Assembly
Subject: tongass roadless

Hey-

Last night the Wrangell Borough followed the Ketchikan Borough and chose alternative 6.

I applaud their efforts, as that is my choice. Alternative one is a blanket of protection that goes farther than needed. Our community has a shrinking tax base, rising costs, and infrastructure we've taken on and need to maintain. We should be proponents for keeping the doors of growth open.

The statement I heard more than once, that commercial fishermen support alternative 1 may be true, but it should also be noted, not all. United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters has not taken an alternative stance, realizing that it has members on both ends of the spectrum, and some in between.

I work for this organization and our "battle" with the timber industry occurred in the 80's. Salmon habitat protections were put into place then, and will still be there regardless of what this proposed rule becomes. Prince of Wales Island, the heaviest logged and roaded island in the state, had the best salmon returns in the region in 2019. Upper Stephens Passage and Frederick Sound, and systems within them, saw again, as they have the last 5 years, horrific returns. There has never been logging in these areas. So despite logging, systems survive. Despite unsullied wilderness, systems fail. Kind of flies in the face of the hand wringing emotional testimony I heard at the December 2 meeting.

My personal take is that this assembly has failed to take a reasonable open approach that is in the best interest of our borough. I know that isn't new from this quarter, but I felt I should weigh in.

As always, I appreciate all of you taking on the responsibilities of your position. It's never easy representing a diverse group of people.

Respectfully,

Max Worhatch