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From: Bill Tremblay <brtrembla@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 5, 2021 8:22 AM
To: Assembly
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Subject: Don't waste resources on the Tongass Roadless Discussion

The discussion and conflict regarding the Tongass Roadless designation is nothing more than a political football that should just be left alone.

The inclusion of the Tongass into the Roadless designation was a political move that was not necessary given the very strict Standards and Guidelines approved in the Final Tongass Forest Plan Revision Decision. Standards and Guidelines that were actually negotiated with White House staff to afford the maximum protections. (As told to me by the planning team leader for the Tongass Forest Plan Revision process.)

Since the passage of the Tongass Timber Reform Act of 1990, the issue hasn't been so much about timber sales supporting local economies but the loss of the significant subsidies the Federal Government use to plow into the timber industry. (\$45 million/year as directed by the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980; ANILCA). As a Pacific Rim resource, the timber industry has a tough time competing against others who may be receiving more subsidies from their countries (Canada), lack of environmental constraints (Russia), or labor costs (Southeast Asia).

More of a concern should be the inability of the Forest Service to provide an explanation of what went wrong on the Tonka Timber Sale? At the Roadless hearing held in Petersburg, almost a year and a half ago, the Regional Forester for the Alaska Region said that Petersburg would hear of the resolution of an audit of the Tonka Timber Sale where a 2016 Government Accounting Office audit found a number of problems with the contract administration and purchaser activities. To date, the Forest Service provided feedback on a timber sale on Prince of Wales but have never heard of how or if the Forest Service has corrected the administrative problems found on the Tonka Timber Sale. As a reminder, the timber sale purchaser was able to high-grade the cutting of timber which resulted in less volume being cut and paid for than expected. The outcome was that fewer restoration projects were completed because the funds to do the work wasn't realized.

We can and should be more focused on what is happening to the management of the forest near our community instead of wasting time and resources on a political football that is nothing more than a means as a fundraiser for either side.

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