

**Becky Knight**  
**Written Statement**  
**Petersburg Borough Assembly Meeting, April 5, 2021**  
**re. Intervention on Roadless Rule Litigation**

If my records are correct, the Petersburg Borough Assembly twice considered a resolution regarding the Roadless Rule, in 2018 and 2019—once in support, and once in opposition to the exemption. Both resolutions died for lack of a majority vote. So, the Borough has failed to weigh in on the exemption one way or the other. A decision today to intervene, would be inconsistent with the Borough's failure to take a position and in my view a waste of precious public funds. And I might note that the City or Borough of Wrangell also noted the likely wasted public funds and did not intervene.

Moreover, according to recent research by Dr. Dominic Dellasala<sup>1</sup> and his colleagues who were the primary researchers on recent Tongass carbon/climate science: *"The Tongass is the national carbon champion representing ~44% of the total ecosystem carbon of the entire national forest system."* Our old growth forest provides this service for free.

According to Dr. Dellasala, *"Basically, when you go through an old growth forest, you're walking through a stick of carbon that has been built up into the forest for many, many decades to centuries. And the largest trees in those forests store about 50% of the above-ground carbon, so they are enormously important from a carbon standpoint."*

During an era when climate change is huge concern to life as we know it on planet Earth, any decision to vote to intervene in favor of the exemption would fly in the face of our need to stem the impending climate catastrophe.

Moreover, there are thousands of miles of roads on the Tongass, with hundreds of road crossings that currently impeded fish migration (aka "Aquatic Organism Passage") upstream. The FS lacks the will and the budget to repair those crossings on a comprehensive scale. On that point alone, such a vote in favor of intervention would be inconsistent with support of the fishing industry within the Borough.

I might also note that public support was overwhelming in favor of keeping the Roadless Rule intact—something like 95% of the public comments received.

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<sup>1</sup> Chief Scientist, Wild Heritage, Project of Earth Island Institute. (Data and analysis by Woodwell Climate Research Center) <https://wild-heritage.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Tongassclimaterellevance-dellasala-3-30-21.pdf>

The Borough should simply stand down on this one, save the five thousand dollars intervention cost, and put it to a much better use elsewhere.

Sincerely,

*Becky Knight*

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