



United States Department of Agriculture

# Alaska Roadless Rulemaking



Forest Service

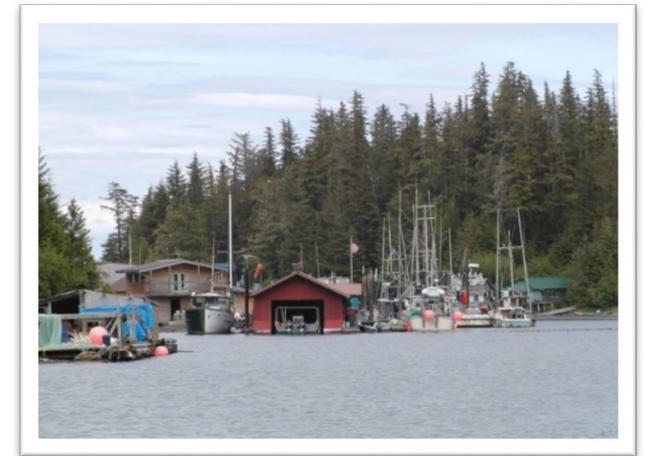
# 2001 Roadless Rule

- US Department of Agriculture issued a regulation to manage roadless areas nationally – the Roadless Area Conservation Rule (2001 Roadless Rule).
- Prohibits timber harvesting, road construction, and road reconstruction in inventoried roadless areas with limited exceptions.
- Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs) were established by the 2001 Roadless Rule.
- 58.5 million acres, nationwide, are inventoried roadless areas.
- Tongass National Forest (16.7 M Acres) comprises 80% of Southeast Alaska.
- Approximately 55% of the Tongass National Forest is inventoried roadless (9.2 M Acres, 110 IRAs)



# What is a Roadless Area?

- National Forest System lands
- Does not include designated Wilderness.
- 80% of IRAs exceed 5,000 acres and are normally without roads.
- 2001 Roadless Rule describes nine roadless characteristics.





# 2001 Roadless Rule – Alaska’s Journey

- State of Alaska challenged inclusion of Chugach and Tongass National Forests.
- 2003 – USDA exempted the Tongass National Forest.
- 2011 – Federal District Court vacated Tongass National Forest exemption.
- 2015 – Ninth Circuit decision upheld the Federal District Court ruling to vacate the Tongass National Forest exemption.
- Today – 2001 Roadless Rule in effect across Alaska’s national forests.
- Pending – State of Alaska lawsuit pending in District of Columbia Circuit Court of Appeals challenging the 2001 Roadless Rule’s application in Alaska.



# Roadless Rulemaking

- This rulemaking process is about considering whether a state-specific approach to managing roadless areas is better than a one size fits all.
- A state-specific rule would replace the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule to protect the social and ecological values and characteristics of inventoried roadless areas by prohibiting, with some exceptions, road construction, road reconstruction, and timber harvest on inventoried roadless areas on National Forest System lands nationwide.

# Why an Alaska Roadless Rule?

The Tongass National Forest is unique from other national forests.

- Size, percent inventoried roadless areas, dependency of local communities, and unique statutory considerations (Tongass Timber Reform Act, Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act)

State of Alaska petitioned US Department of Agriculture Secretary

- Desire to provide for rural economic development opportunities in local communities.

Forest Service desires a long-term and durable approach to addressing roadless issues in Alaska.





# Proposed Alaska Roadless Rule

- Specific to Alaska
- Chugach National Forest – currently outside area of focus.
- Tongass National Forest – consider changing roadless area management
- Could address activities that are allowed or not allowed.
- Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs) could be modified and designated as Alaska Roadless Areas (ARAs).



# Proposed Alaska Roadless Rule

- Does not amend or revise the 2016 Tongass Land Management Plan
- Does not authorize any ground disturbing activities



# Colorado and Idaho Roadless Rules

- State-specific roadless rules.
- Idaho (2008) – zoned IRAs into 5 land categories; management-prohibitions and exceptions vary by category; specifically excluded some lands.
- Colorado (2012) – zoned IRAs into 2 tiers; included exceptions addressing state concerns, updated boundaries, and excluded some lands.



# Public Participation

- Early in the process of considering roadless rulemaking in Alaska.
- August 30, 2018 Notice of Intent – USDA is initiating an environmental impact statement (EIS) and public rulemaking process to address the management of inventoried roadless areas on the Tongass National Forest.
- Currently in 45-day scoping period.
- Additional opportunities for public participation.



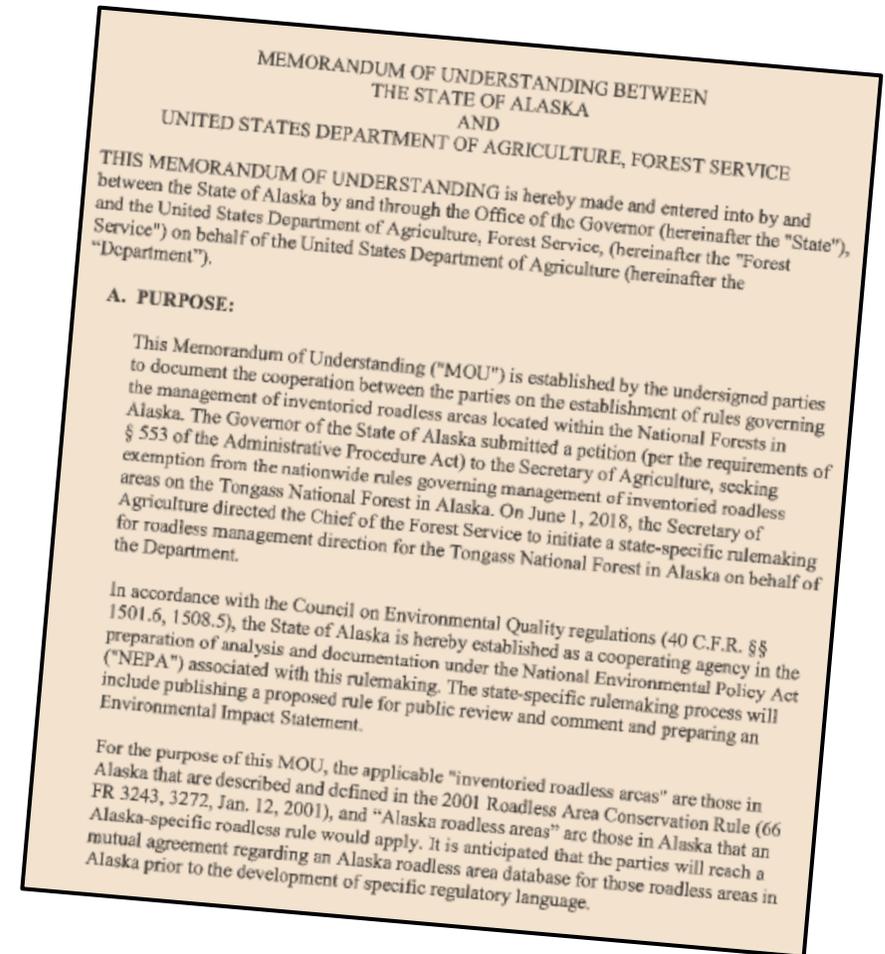
# Government-to-Government

- Tribes have strong legal and cultural ties to aboriginal lands now managed as national forests.
- Federally-recognized tribes have been invited to become cooperating agencies as the Forest Service has federal trust responsibilities to tribal governments.
- Forest Service will honor government-to-government relationships with tribes throughout this process.



# State-Federal Partnership

- Memorandum of Understanding signed establishing the State of Alaska as a cooperating agency (August 2018).
- State of Alaska will provide expertise and specific input regarding state interests.
- Secretary of US Department of Agriculture retains decision-making authority.



# Next Steps

- Notice of Intent **comment period** closes October 15, 2018.
- Proposed Rule and Draft Environmental Impact Statement by Summer 2019 – Additional **comment period**.
- Final Environmental Impact Statement by Summer 2020.
- Secretary of Agriculture, or his designee, will make a decision on a final rule by Summer 2020.



# How to Comment

## *Geography*

- What areas are of concern to you?
- Should specific areas be included or excluded as an Alaska Roadless Area?

## *Activities*

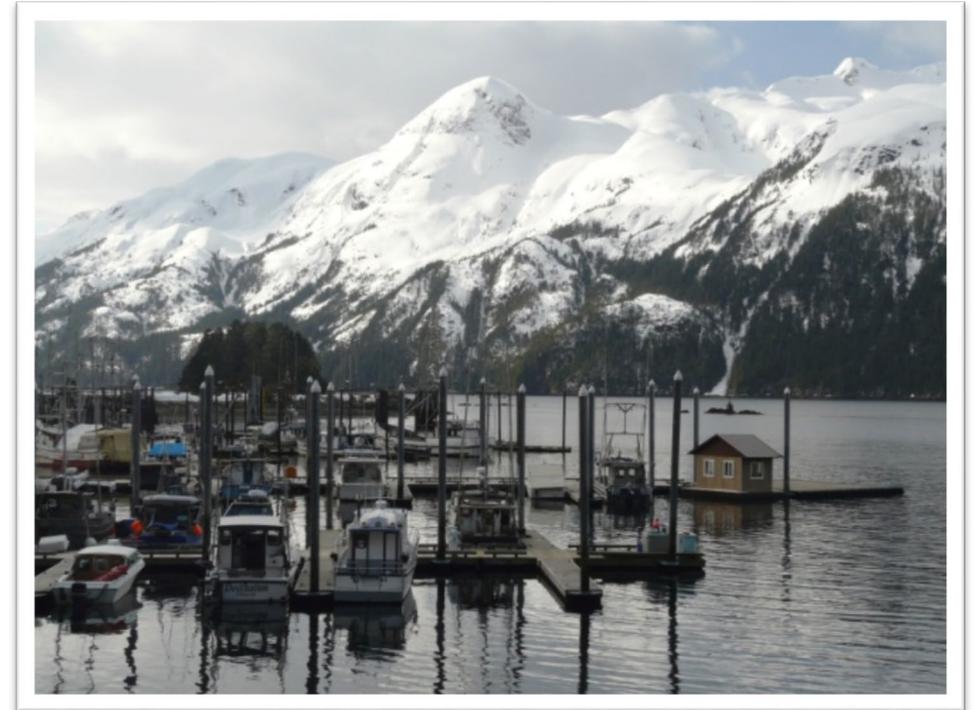
- What type of activities should be allowed in roadless areas?
- What types of activities should be prohibited in roadless areas?



# How to Comment

Comments must be submitted in writing by October 15, 2018.

- On the internet at:  
[www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov)
- Project comment site at:  
[www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54511](http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54511)
- Mail to: Forest Service, Attn: Alaska  
Roadless Rule, P.O. Box 21628, Juneau,  
Alaska 99802
- [akroadlessrule@fs.fed.us](mailto:akroadlessrule@fs.fed.us)





# For More Information

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54511>

**Alaska Roadless Rule**

The USDA Forest Service has announced it will develop a state-specific roadless rule focused on the Tongass National Forest. The rule would amend the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule which establishes prohibitions with some exceptions on road construction, road reconstruction, and timber harvest on 58.5 million acres of inventoried roadless areas on National Forest System lands. The intent of the 2001 Roadless Rule is to provide lasting protection for inventoried roadless areas within the National Forest System in the context of multiple-use management.

A state-specific roadless rule would determine which currently designated roadless areas in the Tongass National Forest would require a different management designation to further Alaska's economic development or other needs, while still conserving roadless areas for generations to come. Inventoried roadless areas covered by the 2001 Roadless Rule comprise 9.2 million acres (55 percent) of the Tongass National Forest (16.8 million acres).

The USDA Forest Service plans to finalize an Alaska roadless rule by June 2020. The rulemaking process will involve National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental review and disclosures, gathering public feedback, conducting public outreach, consultation with Alaska Native tribes and corporations, and cooperation with the State of Alaska. Throughout our work on the Alaska Roadless Rule, the USDA Forest Service will uphold our mission to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/roadmain/roadless/alaskaroadlessrule>

**Alaska Roadless Rulemaking**

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Alaska specific roadless rule that will establish a land classification system designed to conserve roadless area characteristics on the Tongass National Forest.

**Location Summary**

Tongass National Forest  
District: R10 - Alaska Region All Units

**Project Documents**

Pre-Scoping	Scoping		Date Published
<b>Pre-Scoping</b>			
April 25 2018 response from Secy Perdue to Gov Walker Jan 19 letter and ... (PDF 70kb)			08-30-2018
MOU USFS AK State Roadless August 2 2018 (PDF 376kb)			08-30-2018
Jan 19 2018 letter and petition from Gov Walker to Secy Perdue (PDF 289kb)			08-30-2018
AKRR NOI News Release 30AUG2018 (PDF 260kb)			08-30-2018
Federal Register Notice of Intent Alaska Roadless Rule (PDF 217kb)			08-30-2018
09.06.18 AO 299 - Establishing the Alaska Roadless Rule Citizen Advisory Committee Signed (PDF 181kb)			09-07-2018
PR 18-111 Governor Walker issues A.O. 299 to establish the Alaska Roadless Rule Citizen Advisory Committee (PDF 165kb)			09-07-2018
Questions and Answers Sept 13 2018 (PDF 280kb)			09-13-2018

**Project Navigation**

- Project Overview
- Project Detail
- Project Location

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**Forest Links**

- SOPA Reports
- Appeal Responses
- Objection Responses

**NEPA Resources**

- FS NEPA Procedures and Guidance
- NEPA Links
- CEQ's NEPA.net
- CEQ's Guide to NEPA

