

TRANSCRIPT OF ROADLESS RULE  
ANILCA SUBSISTENCE PUBLIC HEARING

PELICAN, ALASKA  
12/12/2019

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 (Pelican, Alaska - 12/12/2019)

3 (On record)

4 MR. VANORMER: If you all are ready, I am ready  
5 and we can go ahead and get started here. Everything  
6 good on your end?

7 CODY: We need just one more minute, Chad.  
8 We're doing a sign-up sheet.

9 MR. VANORMER: Okay. Fantastic. I'll wait.  
10 Opening statement. It's a bit of a formal process to  
11 do these subsistence hearings. So we'll put some  
12 formality into it on my end where I'm going to start by  
13 giving a welcome and basically the kind of a process  
14 that we're going to use to move forward through this  
15 testimony, which obviously is a little bit different  
16 since we're doing this kind of remotely like this.

17 So let me go through some instructions here and  
18 then after I'm done with the instructions I'll go ahead  
19 and give you the mic and you can go ahead and give your  
20 testimony. So recognizing how many people we have,  
21 what I'm going to do is try and make sure that everyone  
22 has an opportunity to speak tonight.

23 I'm going to try and give you a cue at about  
24 six or seven minutes. I'll wave my pen or something  
25 like that just to give you a cue. I don't want to

1 interrupt you altogether and stop someone in the middle  
2 of their testimony, but I do want to make people aware  
3 if they're going really long and maybe bumping into  
4 other people's time, that it might be time to tie it  
5 up. Then, if there's time in the end and people feel  
6 like they didn't get everything they wanted to say,  
7 they can come back around again for a second time at  
8 the microphone. Sound fair?

9 CODY: That's the way I do it.

10 MR. VANORMER: Okay, great. So I'll go ahead  
11 and get started here. I'm going to read from my cheat  
12 sheet and we'll go from there. I want to thank  
13 everyone for attending tonight's public meeting. This  
14 is an opportunity for you to provide input to the  
15 proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft  
16 Environmental Impact Statement.

17 Specifically the Forest Service is seeking your  
18 comment on a proposed rule on how roadless areas in  
19 Alaska and the Tongass National Forest will be managed  
20 in the future. On October 18, 2019 the Notice for  
21 Proposed Rulemaking was published in the Federal  
22 Register and indicated a preferred Alternative 6  
23 exemption of the 2001 National Roadless Area  
24 Conservation Rule applied to the Tongass National  
25 Forest.

1           An exemption would remove all regulatory  
2   restrictions currently in place by the 2001 Roadless  
3   Rule.....

4           It looks like my Adobe Connect just blanked  
5   out. I want to make sure you guys are still on the  
6   phone.

7           UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes, we are.

8           MR. VANORMER: Okay, great. I'll just keep  
9   proceeding and hoping that will come back up here. An  
10   exemption would remove all regulatory restrictions  
11   currently in place by the 2001 Roadless Rule on the  
12   Tongass National Forest. The Forest Service will be  
13   accepting comments on this proposed rule until December  
14   17, 2019. Tonight will be an opportunity for you to  
15   provide oral or written comments.

16           My name is Chad VanOrmer and I am the Director  
17   of Ecosystem Planning and Budget for the USDA Forest  
18   Service in Alaska. Tonight I'm going to serve as the  
19   meeting facilitator, so my job is to make sure that  
20   everyone here who would like to make oral or written  
21   comments on the proposed rule is able to do so.

22           The meeting has been scheduled to last until  
23   9:00 tonight in order to receive your comments. We'll  
24   be using digital voice recorders located here in the  
25   Regional Office to record your comments. Your voice

1 recordings will then be transcribed by a professional  
2 court reporter and included in the project record for  
3 the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking Project.

4           During this comment portion of the meeting we  
5 will not be answering any questions, allowing us time  
6 to listen and hear your comments. In addition to  
7 tonight's meeting we have hosted additional public  
8 information meetings in communities throughout  
9 Southeast Alaska, Anchorage and Washington, DC.

10           In conjunction with those meetings we have  
11 already collected subsistence testimony at communities  
12 in Southeast Alaska to include Ketchikan, Craig,  
13 Hydaburg, Kasaan, Yakutat, Tenakee Springs, Wrangell,  
14 Gustavus, Petersburg, Kake, Sitka, Angoon, Thorne Bay  
15 and Skagway. The current schedule of the meetings can  
16 be found on the Alaska Roadless Rule website.

17           So that's kind of the formal opening that we'll  
18 do here right now and I'm going to get my timer set up  
19 here. I think we have our first person Mayor Weller is  
20 going to go first. What I want you to do to start off  
21 with is state your name and spell it for the record and  
22 then from there you can go ahead and provide your  
23 testimony. So are you ready to go?

24           MR. WELLER: I'm ready to go. This is Mayor  
25 Walt Weller, W-A-L-T W-E-L-L-E-R here in Pelican. My

1 testimony consists of first a couple things I have not  
2 heard and I hope to hear about in the future. One is  
3 what studies have been done to address the long-range  
4 effects of the boom/bust economic cycles that will  
5 naturally come along with this proposed increased  
6 timber production.

7 Another thing I have not heard is what  
8 realistic science has determined that there will be no  
9 long-range negative effects to food security caused by  
10 damage to salmon habitat and interference with wildlife  
11 populations necessary for subsistence.

12 I'm going to have one of our council members  
13 read a resolution the City of Pelican wrote into the  
14 record here shortly. So as mayor of Pelican I do not  
15 believe that any alternatives to Alternative 1 are  
16 acceptable to the future preservation of Southeast  
17 Alaska's natural resources. I do believe that there  
18 will be long-range negative effects well beyond  
19 anyone's ability to foresee at this time and I request  
20 that all of tonight's testimony be included on the  
21 permanent record.

22 In closing, I want to thank the Forest Service  
23 and the Sitka Conservation Society for giving people  
24 who live here the opportunity to input into this  
25 potentially devastating, short-term profit but

1 long-term economic and ecologically-damaging plan.

2 That is my testimony. Thank you very much.

3 MR. VANORMER: All right. Thank you very much,  
4 Mayor Weller. So I guess at this point we'll call up  
5 the next person you have on your list there to provide  
6 testimony.

7 MS. WELLER: Hi, Chad. My name is Celeste  
8 Weller. I'm a city council member here in Pelican,  
9 Alaska. I'm going to read the City of Pelican  
10 Resolution 2019-07. Bear with me. It's about three  
11 pages, but the city council and the mayor feel it's  
12 really important that this is placed on the record as  
13 far as our public comment.

14 This is a resolution by the City of Pelican  
15 Council commenting on the proposed Alaska Roadless  
16 Rule. Whereas, the City of Pelican is a unique  
17 community that prospers by and through the protection  
18 of its natural resources; and

19 Whereas, the sustainability of the future of  
20 Pelican, the economy and the lifestyles of our citizens  
21 depends on nurturing and sustaining the natural  
22 resources supported by our forest, rivers and oceans  
23 both locally and regionally in Southeast Alaska; and

24 Whereas, many Pelican residents obtain their  
25 livelihood from economic activities including

1 commercial fishing and tourism, which are highly  
2 dependent on a pristine and productive natural setting;  
3 and

4           Whereas, salmon populations are facing  
5 increased challenges from changing ocean conditions,  
6 climate change, ocean acidification, rising water  
7 temperatures and streams and ocean warming events in  
8 the Pacific Ocean and freshwater habitat development in  
9 the contiguous U.S.; and

10           Whereas, Southeast Alaska is the most visited  
11 region in Alaska with two-thirds of all visitors to the  
12 state coming to this region and therefore acting as a  
13 significant contribution; and

14           Whereas, the Roadless Rule was first adopted in  
15 2001 to protect 58 million acres of our nation's most  
16 essential and intact roadless areas in the National  
17 Forest System; and

18           Whereas, the State of Alaska has been against  
19 the inclusion of the Tongass and Roadless Rule since it  
20 was promulgated in 2001 despite support for the rule  
21 from a wide variety of constituents living in Southeast  
22 Alaska; and

23           Whereas, during the scoping process for an  
24 Alaska-specific Roadless Rule in 2018, communities  
25 throughout Southeast Alaska support the 2001 Roadless

1 Rule as well as the heavy majority of the official  
2 scoping comments received strongly support maintaining  
3 the 2001 Roadless Rule on the Tongass; and

4           Whereas, the State of Alaska invested time,  
5 staff and money to convene a stakeholder-led citizen  
6 advisory committee in 2018 that provided  
7 recommendations and perspectives from different  
8 interest groups in Southeast Alaska on what a workable  
9 compromise for an Alaska Roadless Rule could look like;  
10 and

11           Whereas, the pursuit of a full exemption from  
12 the 2001 Roadless Rule is highly divisive among local  
13 populations and stakeholders and increased conflict on  
14 the Tongass will tarnish the reputation of the region  
15 nationwide with negative impacts on the tourism  
16 industry; and

17           Whereas, roadless areas in the Tongass are  
18 essential to Southeast Alaska's way of life and  
19 represents some of the most spectacular and unique  
20 roadless areas anywhere in the National Forest System  
21 and support hunting, fishing, customary and traditional  
22 uses, subsistence, outdoor recreation opportunities and  
23 opportunities for business; and

24           Whereas, the amount of carbon stored in the  
25 intact old-growth forest and soils of the Tongass

1 National Forest represent one of the highest carbon  
2 storages in the world and the conservation of intact  
3 roadless areas and old-growth forest in the Tongass are  
4 essential for maintaining local and national climate  
5 resilience and slowing down climate change throughout  
6 the world; and

7           Whereas, the Tongass provides a wide range of  
8 ecosystem services beyond carbon sequestration to  
9 residents and visitors alike on a 24/7 basis naturally  
10 and at no cost to the taxpayer; and

11           Whereas, increased lobbying of old-growth  
12 forest in the existing roadless area of the Tongass  
13 seriously impact the ability of the forest to provide  
14 these vital ecosystem services such as clean water,  
15 clean air, stream temperature regulation and healthy  
16 salmon and wildlife habitat; and

17           Whereas, increased lobbying of old-growth  
18 forests in an existing roadless area would incur  
19 significant cost to taxpayers and new reports estimate  
20 that the subsidization of industrial scale lobbying in  
21 the Tongass have cost taxpayers over \$600 million over  
22 the past 20 years; and

23           Whereas, according to the State of Alaska's own  
24 economic experts and commissioned reports, Tongass  
25 timber is uncompetitive due to fundamental permanent

1 changes that have occurred in global markets, high  
2 labor costs, distance from market and the availability  
3 of less expensive substitutes; and

4           Whereas, the commercial fishing industry and  
5 visitor industries that provide the economic backbone  
6 of Southeast Alaska depend on pristine scenic vistas  
7 and healthy productive watersheds; and

8           Whereas, opening up roadless areas for future  
9 development industrial scale lobbying will actively  
10 work against the Tongass transition and the 2016  
11 Tongass Land Management Plan amendment, which was  
12 created after years of collaborative work between the  
13 diverse groups of stakeholders.

14           Therefore be it resolved that given  
15 long-lasting physical, irresponsible and  
16 environmentally-damaging impacts of any reductions in  
17 current Roadless Rule protections on the Tongass, the  
18 City of Pelican strongly supports lasting protection  
19 for all inventoried roadless areas in the Tongass  
20 National Forest as provided for in the 2001 Roadless  
21 Rule. There should be no exemption from the Roadless  
22 Rule for Alaska and there should be no Alaska-specific  
23 Roadless Rule; and

24           Be it further resolved that the economic  
25 livelihoods of City of Pelican residents would be

1 irreparably harmed by the effects of a full exemption  
2 from the Roadless Rule on the Tongass, which would lead  
3 to increased climate change, increased threat to fish  
4 habitat and development occurring in pristine natural  
5 areas that showcase the tourism potential and natural  
6 beauty of the Tongass National Forest; and

7 Be it finally resolved that the City of Pelican  
8 encourages the USFS to invest in programs, workforce  
9 development and employment opportunities for Southeast  
10 Alaska residents to restore the health and productivity  
11 of the Tongass National Forest, degraded watersheds and  
12 the streams as a means of supporting vital ecosystem  
13 services such as carbon sequestration, small-scale  
14 timber production, fish and wildlife populations,  
15 natural vistas, visitor amenities, subsistence,  
16 hydrological resources and more.

17 Passed and approved by the Pelican City Council  
18 this 18th day of November, 2018 signed by Walt Weller,  
19 Mayor and Lattieca Stewart, City Clerk.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. VANORMER: All right. Thank you very much.  
22 Could you spell your name for the record, please.

23 MS. WELLER: Yes. My first name is Celeste,  
24 C-E-L-E-S-T-E, last name Weller, W-E-L-L-E-R.

25 MR. VANORMER: All right. Thank you very much

1 for that testimony.

2 MS. WELLER: Thank you, Chad.

3 MR. VANORMER: All right. I think we're ready  
4 for the next individual.

5 MR. WIEDEMANN: My name is Matthew Wiedemann,  
6 W-I-E-D-E-M-A-N-N. I threw out some concerns during  
7 the question and answer period. Again, I'm grateful  
8 that you're here giving us this opportunity to put our  
9 concerns out there. I mistakenly thought the area that  
10 Proposal 3 was practical, but I the whole time have  
11 been in favor of Proposal 1 only.

12 I see that, as our mayor has said and as  
13 Celeste has said, the environmental statement just  
14 isn't there to prove any kind of thing to anyone that  
15 it's going to do anything but have terrible effects.  
16 Especially on our wildlife populations and deer hunting  
17 and overall our fishing, our watersheds and everything.

18 The island Chichagof especially is -- you can  
19 look at the eastern side of the state and it's been  
20 logged heavily and probably adequately enough for --  
21 you can look at the state of regrowth and none of that  
22 stuff is happening in any type of rate of production.  
23 It's really slow to come back.

24 It's been really hard on the ecosystem, for the  
25 animals and you can just see the whole difference in

1 the watersheds and everything, the erosion and all  
2 those problems that we will face.

3 I can't say anything better than our mayor  
4 already said. I totally agree with everything he said.  
5 I'm just testifying to show you that I'm concerned  
6 about it and I'm grateful to all my neighbors for  
7 showing up. We're all concerned about it.

8 Thank you.

9 MR. VANORMER: All right. Thank you very much.

10 MR. DUFFEY: My name is David Duffey, D-A-V-I-D  
11 D-U-F-F-E-Y. I came here in 1976 to work on a cold  
12 storage. This is a fishing town and it is a fishing  
13 town now. I continued through here. All my priorities  
14 are Pelican. This is where I -- I want to see Pelican  
15 succeed, but the plans that are in here are not for any  
16 small community, any in Southeast to live is currently  
17 existing.

18 So I'm in favor of Alternative 1, no action.  
19 I'm hoping these young kids here will see a future  
20 here, a future with old growth. Once this old growth  
21 is gone, cut down, it's never going to come back.  
22 Global warming is here. That's the reality and you  
23 guys have got to get used to the idea and act  
24 accordingly.

25 Thank you.

1 MR. VANORMER: Thank you very much, David.

2 MS. WELLER: We've got a couple young kids here  
3 for you for a treat.

4 MR. VANORMER: All right. Fantastic.

5 MS. SLATER: Hi. My name is Alley Slater,  
6 A-L-L-E-Y S-L-A-T-E-R. I'm 13 years old and I live in  
7 Pelican, Alaska. Well, four miles away from Pelican  
8 near Phonograph Creek. The Tongass is important to me  
9 because my family hunts and fishes for a living and if  
10 the Tongass gets taken away, then getting food and  
11 resources will get harder because the ferry system had  
12 been closed and flying planes over here is more  
13 expensive.

14 As the salmon streams get blocked because of  
15 the trees all over and the crossing and contaminating  
16 the water with the oil from the equipment, then the  
17 salmon population in Pelican would decrease. Deer  
18 hunting would get harder because of the habitat loss  
19 and it just makes it harder to live out here in Pelican  
20 because there's no salmon to fish and there's no deer  
21 to hunt.

22 I grew up playing in the woods, making forts  
23 and exploring all around the woods. The alternative I  
24 would choose is Alternative 1 because I want to keep  
25 the trees around Pelican. It is really unfair to the

1 animals and the citizens of Pelican because, one, we're  
2 all spending more money on flying planes over with food  
3 and, two, cutting down the Tongass will kill animal  
4 habitats and make living out in Pelican a lot harder  
5 because we can't have salmon to fish and deer to hunt.

6 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

7 MR. VANORMER: Thank you for testifying, Alley.

8 MS. KUHN: Hi. My name is Sage Kuhn, S-A-G-E  
9 K-U-H-N. I'm 12 years old and I live in Pelican,  
10 Alaska. I live in the Tongass National Forest. I  
11 support Alternative 1 because if we get rid of the  
12 forest, we won't be able to hunt or fish. There won't  
13 be fish going upstream because the trees will block the  
14 streams and the deer habitats will no longer be around  
15 because the trees will be cut down and they will have  
16 nowhere to sleep.

17 This is how families put food on their tables.  
18 This is my family's lifestyle. Even other families  
19 spend most of their day hunting and fishing. If these  
20 trees get cut down, deer and fish will no longer be  
21 around. It will affect me because I grew up in the  
22 woods. It was a place I like to play when I'm hanging  
23 out with family or friends.

24 Pelican, Alaska is too small to be losing deer  
25 and fish. We are lucky to be getting food on the

1 planes because the ferry won't be coming anymore. We  
2 shouldn't have to give up our forest just because  
3 people say so. It will affect our food source.

4 I build forts, play hide and seek, play tag and  
5 the fun activities you can do in the woods. This isn't  
6 just going to affect the environment, it's going to  
7 affect every child that has spent their time out in  
8 wildlife.

9 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

10 MR. VANORMER: Thank you, Sage.

11 MS. WELLER: These guys are doing a great job  
12 and for being brave.

13 MR. SLATER: Hello. My name is Jack Slater. I  
14 am 12 years old and I live in a house near Phonograph  
15 Creek. I support Alternative 1 because I want to  
16 protect the forest and because my family does depend on  
17 hunting and fishing for food. Deforesting the Tongass  
18 would hurt that. It would also greatly affect the  
19 environment because it would -- sorry.

20 MS. WELLER: It's okay, Jack.

21 MR. VANORMER: Take your time.

22 MR. SLATER: This is a letter I wrote from in  
23 my school. 9.2 million acres of land will be logged if  
24 the Tongass Forest is exempted from the Roadless Rule.  
25 That's roughly 10 islands. I think all areas that meet

1 the regulations to receive protection from the Roadless  
2 Rule should be maintained because that was the rule the  
3 government made and they should stick to it.

4 If the Tongass is exempted from the Roadless  
5 Rule, it will cause a lot of damage to the ecosystem.  
6 Logging the Tongass wouldn't help the economy either  
7 because it would cost too much to build roads and cut  
8 down the trees.

9 I think exempting the Tongass would be bad and  
10 some people might say that they're not going to affect  
11 a lot of it, only these areas, but the areas they say  
12 they are cutting down have the most trees.

13 Logging the Tongass wouldn't help the economy  
14 either because -- I already said that. Thank you for  
15 letting me testify.

16 MR. VANORMER: All right. Thank you, Jack.

17 MS. SLATER: Hi. My name is Jareme Slater and  
18 I live in Pelican, Alaska. I moved to Southeast Alaska  
19 2017 where I live with my husband and my three  
20 children. We use the Tongass to hunt, fish and forage  
21 for much of our food.

22 I'm ready to comment on the Alaska Roadless  
23 Rule DEIS because I'm concerned with how the rule and  
24 proposed full exemption will impact my fishing,  
25 hunting, subsistence harvesting, foraging for wild

1 foods and the peace and solitude that I find in nature.  
2 The conservation of this is for my children.

3 Out of the alternatives described in the AK RR  
4 DEIS I support Alternative 1, no action. It protects  
5 important fish and wildlife habitat from clearcutting  
6 and road building. I depend on roadless areas in the  
7 Tongass National Forest for a healthy fish habitat,  
8 deer habitat and subsistence hunting, foraging and  
9 gathering wild foods, recreating and enjoying nature,  
10 keeping our public lands for future generations,  
11 viewing wildlife.

12 A full exemption does not protect these values  
13 nor does it effectively balance economic development  
14 and conservation of the roadless area characteristics.  
15 A full exemption from the roadless rule, increased  
16 logging and road building will negatively impact the  
17 Tongass and what I and many other use and depend on for  
18 the forest to provide for us.

19 I do not support the Forest Service's preferred  
20 alternative of a full exemption. A full exemption is  
21 not in the interest of Southeast Alaskan residents who  
22 live in and use the Tongass National Forest because a  
23 full exemption will not add significant or widespread  
24 economic benefit and will severely impact our bait  
25 businesses, commercial fishing and subsistence

1 opportunities.

2           The State of Alaska says that a full exemption  
3 will not help create more rural economic development  
4 opportunities. It would instead harm our existing  
5 rural economies that are based on the tourism industry  
6 and commercial fishing industry.

7           Exporting round logs is a big mistake. It  
8 allows small number of people to benefit, but hurts a  
9 wide group of people and animals. I urge the Forest  
10 Service to prioritize the voices of Southeast Alaskans  
11 over those of our political representatives and  
12 corporate interests.

13           Choosing a full exemption will not create a  
14 long-lasting durable solution for roadless areas on the  
15 Tongass. It will only increase the legal challenges,  
16 uncertainty for business and conflict on the Tongass  
17 going forward.

18           Thank you.

19           MR. VANORMER: Thank you. I'm sorry, I didn't  
20 catch the name and I would appreciate if you could  
21 spell it for the record.

22           MS. SLATER: My name is J-E-R-A-M-E  
23 S-L-A-T-E-R.

24           MR. VANORMER: Fantastic. All right. Thank  
25 you very much.

1 MS. SLATER: Thank you.

2 MR. J. SLATER: Good evening, Mr. VanOrmer. My  
3 name is James Slater, J-A-M-E-S S-L-A-T-E-R. I live in  
4 Pelican, Alaska. I've lived in (indiscernible) for  
5 almost 20 years. I homestead here with my wife and  
6 three children.

7 The majority of our food comes from subsistence  
8 activities in the areas surrounding our residence.  
9 This food consists of deer, all kinds of fish, but in  
10 particular salmon, wild berries, seaweed and mushrooms.  
11 We live here because we value a traditional lifestyle  
12 that emphasizes respect for the environment and  
13 appreciation for all it has to offer.

14 I'm ready to comment on the Alaska Roadless  
15 Rule DEIS because I'm concerned with how the rule and  
16 proposed full exemption will impact my fishing,  
17 hunting, subsistence harvesting, foraging for wild  
18 foods and the peace and solitude that I find in nature.  
19 Importantly, the conservation of this special place for  
20 my children and their children.

21 Out of the alternatives described in the AK RR  
22 DEIS I support Alternative 1, no action. It protects  
23 important fish and wildlife habitat from logging and  
24 road building. I depend on roadless areas in the  
25 Tongass National Forest for a healthy fish habitat,

1 deer habitat, subsistence hunting, foraging and  
2 gathering wild foods, recreating, enjoying nature,  
3 viewing wildlife and keeping our public lands for  
4 future generations.

5 A full exemption does not protect these values  
6 nor does it effectively balance economic development  
7 and conservation of the roadless area characteristics.  
8 A full exemption from the roadless rule, increased  
9 logging and road building will negatively impact the  
10 Tongass and what I and many other use and depend on for  
11 the forest to provide for us.

12 The roadless areas of the Tongass are  
13 especially important to me are those on or around  
14 northern Chichagof Island and Yakobi Island. In  
15 particular, the watersheds located in Lisianski and  
16 Lenon (ph) Straits. These include Lisianski River,  
17 Saloma Creek, Phonograph Creek, Bear Creek and Bohemia  
18 Basin.

19 I want the roadless areas in those locations to  
20 stay in roadless status in any alternative selected by  
21 the Forest Service and be managed to provide for the  
22 uses and activities I listed above.

23 With respect to the Tongass in general, it is  
24 important to me that the Tongass 77 and the TNC  
25 conservation priority areas retain their roadless

1     protections.

2             I do not support the Forest Service's preferred  
3     alternative of a full exemption. A full exemption is  
4     not in the interest of the residents of Pelican and all  
5     Southeast Alaskan residents who live in and use the  
6     Tongass National Forest because the economy has shifted  
7     away from timber to tourism. It is clear that the  
8     majority of Southeast Alaskans support a no action  
9     alternative and see an exemption as a threat to their  
10    livelihood and way of life. The government needs to  
11    listen to residents who will be directly affected.

12            The State of Alaska says that a full exemption  
13    is needed for rural economic development opportunities;  
14    however, a full exemption would not create more rural  
15    development opportunities. It would instead harm our  
16    existing rural economies that are starting to shift to  
17    tourism and also negatively affect our commercial  
18    fishing industry.

19            It would further our rural economic  
20    opportunities because pursuing the same outdated  
21    economic model of old growth, clearcut harvesting for  
22    export stifles innovation and possibly in other sectors  
23    that it precludes. In particular, mariculture and  
24    sustainable young growth harvest and rural agriculture.

25            If the Forest Service wants to support rural

1 and economic development, they should devote resources  
2 to support our fishing and visitor industries,  
3 transition to second growth logging, invest in creating  
4 and maintaining recreational infrastructure, improve  
5 and streamline our existing permitting processes for  
6 the important community projects rather than rehashing  
7 old conflicts.

8           The fact that much of this timber will be  
9 exported in the round adds insult to injury. The USDA  
10 should require that all timber harvested from Federal  
11 land be processed here in the USA. Economically the  
12 timber industry does little to benefit the public once  
13 the total cost for the road development and extraction  
14 are taken into account.

15           I urge the Forest Service to prioritize the  
16 voices of Southeast Alaskans over those of our  
17 political representatives and corporate interests.

18           Choosing a full exemption will not create a  
19 long-lasting durable solution for roadless areas on the  
20 Tongass. It will only increase the legal challenges,  
21 uncertainty for business and conflict on the Tongass  
22 going forward.

23           Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

24           MR. VANORMER: All right. Thank you, James.

25           MR. MORRIS: My name is Jamison Mork. I'm a City

1 Council member. My occupation is commercial fishing,  
2 but I'm also a subsistence hunter and I emphasize that  
3 a lot because I spend a lot of my time in the woods as  
4 soon as fishing is done in October. It's literally the  
5 highlight of my year is to go into the forest and hunt  
6 black-tailed deer and to forage for mushrooms and to  
7 also take things back with me for art.

8           Where I typically find myself hunting I've  
9 noticed is in old growth spruce stands. Not  
10 necessarily muskegs, places that I imagine are going to  
11 be targeted for logging. I've seen the effects of  
12 logging out these large old-growth forests when you  
13 remove the forest canopy and you have a large snow, how  
14 that decimates the black-tail population.

15           A good example of that was the winter of  
16 2008-2009 when there was literally deer drowning to  
17 death on the shores of the beach on the big high tides  
18 in January and February because the old-growth forest  
19 around Hoonah and Tenakee had been reduced to a ribbon  
20 along the shore and was no longer protecting the deer  
21 from the snow and they were literally on the beach up  
22 against 10-foot snowbanks drowning as the tide came in.

23           So I know that this proposal to log these  
24 old-growth forests goes directly against the welfare of  
25 subsistence deer hunting and I've seen it happen and I

1 do not want to repeat the past.

2 So from strictly a subsistence viewpoint as an  
3 enthusiastic black-tail hunter, I fully support  
4 Alternative 1 and I'm terrified by Alternative 6. So  
5 very much against Alternative 6.

6 Thank you.

7 MR. VANORMER: All right. Thanks for your  
8 testimony, Jamison.

9 MR. ANDREWS: Hi. My name is Tom Andrews.  
10 That's T-O-M A-N-D-R-E-W-S. I live in Pelican, Alaska.  
11 I have commercial fished, sport fished, hunted and  
12 basically subsisted on everything possible in this area  
13 for the last 30 years.

14 I support Alternative 1 because Alaska should  
15 always be and in many ways is a rural standard for  
16 sustainable responsible use of resources, while at the  
17 same time keeping our natural remote beauty intact.  
18 Changing from Alternative 1 will greatly jeopardize  
19 that.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. VANORMER: All right. Thank you, Tom.

22 MR. KEIZER: Hi. My name is Chuck Keizer.  
23 That's spelled K-E-I-Z-E-R. I'm against anything. I  
24 support Alternative 1. From listening to the public  
25 comments earlier, one of the problems I have is -- when

1 it said that 97 or 95 percent of the people weren't in  
2 favor of any changes but sticking with Alternative 1, I  
3 don't understand what part of no is not understood.

4 In terms of subsistence, any time you cut a big  
5 tree down or any tree down, you're letting more  
6 sunlight in. Any time you let more sunlight in, you're  
7 letting more energy in. The energy can heat up the  
8 water, which has a detrimental effect on the small  
9 fish. Any time you put in more sunlight, you also  
10 affect the ecology of the area and snow flow, which we  
11 heard earlier.

12 So any time you have a tree removal -- and I  
13 have lived in parts where there has been wholesale  
14 harvesting of trees and not only in an evergreen  
15 forest, but it drastically changes the environment and  
16 I think this would be greatly detrimental to the  
17 subsistence and the livelihood of the people who are  
18 here.

19 Whether their subsistence is commercial  
20 fishing, whether their subsistence is sport fishing,  
21 whether their subsistence is harvesting of berries or  
22 anything that's out there, anything but Alternative 1  
23 will have a major negative impact.

24 Thank you very much.

25 MR. VANORMER: All right. Thank you, Chuck.

1 MS. WELLER: This is Celeste Weller speaking  
2 again now as a citizen. C-E-L-E-S-T-E W-E-L-L-E-R. My  
3 name is Celeste and I like to take long walks in the  
4 woods. Besides that I moved to Alaska because I fell  
5 in love with the landscape. Most importantly the  
6 forest. I moved here from the concrete city and I  
7 hated it. This place has enough real beauty that I  
8 haven't been able to find anywhere else.

9 I quickly adopted a subsistence living  
10 lifestyle here. It's the way to go. It's very  
11 fulfilling. What's in my freezer right now. Rockfish,  
12 salmon, shrimp. Lots of deer. These are all  
13 sustainably-sourced, 100 percent organic, minimally  
14 processed, self-acquired foods and I didn't have to pay  
15 to have them flown in on a plane or shipped on a ferry.  
16 They haven't been handled by anybody but me and I know  
17 exactly what I'm consuming.

18 I like to pick berries. I like to put  
19 fiddlehead ferns in my salad. When I go for the long  
20 walks in the woods I like to drink the fresh water  
21 because I know it's clean. I know I'm not going to get  
22 sick when I drink it.

23 Besides the subsistence living I'm a commercial  
24 fisherman now. I trawl for salmon. So I have a very  
25 high concern for the watersheds for the salmon. That's

1 my livelihood.

2 The old-growth forests here, they're haunting  
3 to walk around in. I stay here and many people also,  
4 but not too many thankfully, stay here because we like  
5 this lifestyle. It's beautiful, it's isolated, it's  
6 forested and we can live a subsistence lifestyle.

7 Lastly, I'm a wildlife photographer, but what  
8 am I going to shoot when the delicate ecosystems of  
9 these animal populations are dramatically and  
10 irreversibly altered.

11 I do support Alternative 1. I support things  
12 stay the same.

13 Thank you.

14 MR. VANORMER: Thank you, Celeste.

15 MR. ALLARD: Hi. My name is Mike Allard. I'm  
16 on Pelican City Council. I'm a commercial fisherman  
17 and a fur trapper. Without these big forests we'll  
18 have nothing. If they're taken away from us, it will  
19 be all gone. Once they're gone, they'll never come  
20 back. It will be second growth. It will never be the  
21 same. All the ecosystems depend on it; the fish, the  
22 animals, the plants, the birds.

23 Not only that, but like I said once it's gone  
24 we'll never get it back for our generation, our  
25 grandkids and their kids, and tourists, Alaskans and

1 the like. So it's a great thing to take care of this  
2 because so much of it has already been harvested and  
3 taken out of the world today.

4 I get pretty emotional thinking about it. I've  
5 lived in Sitka and I've seen the logging that's gone on  
6 there and in Hoonah and a few other places. I've spent  
7 some time in the Columbia River and I see what's  
8 happened to the forest down there and the rivers when  
9 you go steelhead fishing.

10 To get to the rivers there's a thin ribbon of  
11 trees and what it is is not only trees but stumps with  
12 the roots. When it rains, all the sediment flows down  
13 through there killing eggs of the steelhead and the  
14 salmon. Not only that, but there's the clams, the  
15 crabs, flounders, seals, sea plants and everything  
16 involved with this.

17 It's not just the big forest. It's everything  
18 connected to it. So without that our way of life will  
19 go away and it will never come back. So I just support  
20 Alternative 1 there and hope people think about it. To  
21 get a dollar off of it is -- sure, it would be nice to  
22 have a dollar, but what about the future for all  
23 generations to have.

24 That's all I got. Thank you.

25 MR. VANORMER: All right. Thank you, Mike.

1 MS. BAUSCHER: Okay. I think that's the bulk  
2 of the testimony, but I'm going to say a little  
3 something real quick. This is Heather Bauscher,  
4 H-E-A-T-H-E-R B-A-U-S-C-H-E-R.

5 I know the set of conditions that didn't allow  
6 you to be here in person, but I wanted to describe this  
7 room to you tonight so this isn't lost on you and that  
8 this actually makes it on the record because I know you  
9 don't actually have the opportunity to experience this  
10 and that's a disservice to somebody who's in a  
11 decision-making capacity.

12 From what I understand, there's maybe around 40  
13 people that live here in the wintertime. It is a cold,  
14 stark, rainy evening, okay, and there's about 20 of the  
15 residents of this community here in this room tonight.

16 Folks went out of their way to cook extra food.  
17 Thank you, Jerame, for making homemade panza and lumpia  
18 made with deer meat that was harvested from the forest.  
19 We've got some pasta with some salmon over there that  
20 was also harvested from this forest. You can't  
21 schedule a four-hour-long meeting and not feed people,  
22 right.

23 So it's kind of beautiful the way folks have  
24 come together to make time to spend time together here  
25 tonight defending their community and defending the

1 forest that is around them.

2 Just so you know, there are folks in this room  
3 that are going to have to skiff as a family with 12  
4 year old children and younger four miles up the inlet  
5 tonight to get home. They went out of their way to  
6 make sure they were here to speak for their trees and  
7 their fish and their neighbors.

8 So I just wanted to make sure that wasn't lost  
9 on you all because this is a pretty impressive turnout  
10 on a night like this and a community like this.

11 I just want to say thanks for making this  
12 community meeting happen so that these folks even had a  
13 chance to get these words in and get their feelings  
14 heard by folks on your end.

15 MR. VANORMER: Great. Fantastic. Thank you,  
16 Heather, for painting that picture for me. You're  
17 making me wish I was there too to enjoy that community  
18 spirit. I wouldn't expect anything less either. It's  
19 fantastic to be part of the Southeast Alaska community  
20 here and that's great. Thank you for sharing that.

21 Thank you all too for kind of working with us  
22 in this environment in terms of doing this meeting  
23 remotely. Thanks to Mayor Weller for writing the  
24 letter to get our attention to come and put some energy  
25 and listen to the community of Pelican regarding this

1 important rulemaking process.

2 Especially a big thanks to Cody for helping  
3 pull this all together on his end. He's been nothing  
4 but very supportive and really trying to help move  
5 through this technology and making this happen. I'm  
6 pretty pleased with how it went this way. Again, you  
7 certainly are making me regret not actually making the  
8 trip out there, but thank you.

9 Are there any other testimonies for this  
10 evening?

11 MS. BAUSCHER: Any last words or things to add  
12 to what they said before but they felt like they  
13 couldn't say?

14 (No comments)

15 MS. BAUSCHER: I think that's it, Chad.

16 MR. VANORMER: Okay. All right. Well, I guess  
17 with that then we'll go ahead and conclude the public  
18 testimony. Just for the record it's 7:53 and I think  
19 we've done a good job of capturing the testimonies  
20 here. We'll get those transcribed and included into  
21 the record.

22 Again, I really appreciate the individuals who  
23 took the time out tonight to come out on a weeknight  
24 and having to do your travels back home. Best wishes  
25 for a safe passage back to your homes tonight. Look

1 forward next to a personal visit out in Pelican  
2 sometime here hopefully in the next year sometime.

3 Thanks again for everything.

4 (Off record)

5 (END OF RECORDING)

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I, Salena A. Hile, hereby certify that the foregoing pages numbered 02 through 35 are a true, accurate, and complete transcript of ANILCA PUBLIC HEARING, PELICAN, ALASKA transcribed under my direction from a copy of an electronic sound recording to the best of our knowledge and ability.

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DATE

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SALENA A. HILE, (Transcriber)