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Comments:

Docket: FS-2018-0059

Roadless Area Conservation; National Forest System Lands in Alaska

Comment On: FS-2018-0059-0001

Roadless Area Conservation; National Forest System Lands in Alaska

Document: FS-2018-0059-DRAFT-11890

Comment on FR Doc # 2018-18937

Submitter Information

Name: Jason Brune

General Comment

Attached please find comments from Cook Inlet Region, Inc.

Attachments

CIRI Roadless Rule Comments 10152018

October 15, 2018

Ken Tu, Interdisciplinary Team Leader

USDA Forest Service, Alaska Region

Ecosystem Planning and Budget Staff

P.O. Box 21628

Juneau, AK 99802-1628

Re: Alaska Roadless Rule

Dear Mr. Tu:

The following comments are submitted on behalf of Cook Inlet Region, Inc. (CIRI), an Alaska Native Regional Corporation formed under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 (ANCSA) to benefit Alaska Natives with ties to the Cook Inlet region. CIRI, which is comprised of nearly 9,000 Alaska Native shareholders, is the largest private landowner in Southcentral Alaska, with more than 1.3 million acres of subsurface estate and large surface estates shared between CIRI and its seven village corporations. The CIRI surface estate includes land adjacent to both the Tongass National Forest (Tongass) and the Chugach National Forest (Chugach).

In response to the August 30, 2018 Notice of Intent solicitation for comment by the US Forest Service (Service) CIRI is, at this time, expressing support for an Alaska-specific exemption from the 2001 Roadless Rule. While we join the State of Alaska and numerous other entities in urging the Service to exempt the entire Tongass from the 2001 Roadless Rule, we also note with disappointment that the Chugach is not currently under consideration for exemption. As the Service is aware, the Chugach is the second-largest Forest in the nation. However, present policies including the Roadless Rule and a zero Annual Sale Quantity of timber under the Chugach Revised Land Management Plan make development of resources on these lands nearly impossible. Consequently, adjacent landowners like CIRI are precluded from enjoying the economies and support infrastructure of scale which would otherwise arise from multiple-use management of these public lands. The roadless rule limits access to, and across, CIRI lands and minimizes opportunities in timber, mining, renewable energy, and other industries. We request that the Service provide a process to exempt the Chugach from the 2001 Roadless Rule, similar to the one presently underway for the Tongass.

We would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Service's consideration of an Alaska-specific exemption to the 2001 Roadless Rule. We look forward to continued consultation as the rule making process proceeds.

Sincerely,

COOK INLET REGION, INC.

Jason Brune

Senior Director, Lands and Resources

[Contents of letter duplicated in attachment]