

TRANSCRIPT OF ROADLESS RULE  
ANILCA SUBSISTENCE PUBLIC HEARING

SITKA, ALASKA  
11/12/2019

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

2 (Sitka, Alaska - 11/12/2019)

3 (On record)

4 MR. VANORMER: All right. Let's go ahead and  
5 get started with the subsistence hearing part of this  
6 meeting. Hoping this microphone -- you may have to  
7 lean into it a little bit. If I can get everyone's  
8 attention, we're going to get going here.

9 It's important that we have kind of some quiet  
10 because there's going to be some instructions in the  
11 beginning. It's a bit of a formal process doing  
12 subsistence testimony, so it's kind of important that  
13 we pay respect to kind of the folks that are going to  
14 be up here speaking. If you want to do some hall talk  
15 and that kind of stuff, there's a wonderful hallway out  
16 there to go there and do that.

17 All right. Can everyone hear me okay?

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Not really.

19 MR. VANORMER: All right. Maybe the meeting  
20 facilitator if they can turn the mic up maybe a little  
21 bit, that might help. Whoever that is. I'll go ahead  
22 and just lean into it and get started here.

23 First of all I want to thank everyone for  
24 attending tonight's public meeting. This is an  
25 opportunity for you to provide input to the proposed

1 Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft  
2 Environmental Impact Statement.

3 Specifically the Forest Service is seeking your  
4 comment on a proposed rule on how roadless areas in  
5 Alaska and the Tongass National Forest will be managed  
6 in the future. On October 18, 2019 the Notice for  
7 Proposed Rulemaking was published in the Federal  
8 Register and indicated a preferred Alternative 6  
9 exemption of the 2001 National Roadless Area  
10 Conservation Rule applied to the Tongass National  
11 Forest.

12 An exemption would remove all regulatory  
13 restrictions currently in place by the 2001 Roadless  
14 Rule on the Tongass National Forest. The Forest  
15 Service will be accepting comments on this proposed  
16 rule until December 17, 2019. Tonight will be an  
17 opportunity for you to provide oral or written  
18 comments.

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

25 The meeting has been scheduled to last until

1 9:00 o'clock tonight in order to receive your comments.  
2 We'll be using digital voice recorders located on the  
3 table near the speaker to record your comments. Your  
4 voice recording will then be transcribed by a  
5 professional court reporter and included in the project  
6 record for the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking Project.

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

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

20           Because of the importance of your comments it  
21 is necessary that we follow certain procedures during  
22 the meeting. As you entered the meeting room you were  
23 asked to sign in. It is important that every person  
24 present sign in so that we have a complete record of  
25 all those who attended or participate in this meeting.

1           If you plan to make oral comments tonight,  
2 please be sure to indicate it on the sign-in sheet.  
3 Also if you're attending this meeting or submitting  
4 comments on behalf of a group or organization, please  
5 indicate the name of the group or entity that you  
6 represent.

7           Let me emphasize that the principal purpose of  
8 the public comment part of this meeting is to receive  
9 information and comments from you on the record. So we  
10 have about 20 to 25 folks that have signed up. When I  
11 split that over two hours, we're looking at about a  
12 four minute or so equal distribution of time.

13           So my plan here tonight would be to call a  
14 speaker up, the speaker would come up and I would keep  
15 time for about four minutes or so. After four minutes  
16 what I'm going to do is just kind of stand silently and  
17 that will be your cue that we're kind of coming to the  
18 end. At that point in time I would just ask the  
19 speaker to kind of respect the time of everyone else  
20 and kind of start closing their comments. If you have  
21 more to say, we can bring you back up at the end if  
22 there's still time or we can take the remaining of your  
23 comments in writing at that point in time.

24           I'm going to be starting here. What I'll do is  
25 name the first name, they'll come on up and then I'll

1 indicate who's next so the next speaker is kind of  
2 ready to come on up after the first one is done.

3 Any questions on kind of the procedures, how  
4 we're going to roll here?

5 (No comments)

6 MR. VANORMER: All right. So time being about  
7 7:05 I'm going to go ahead and call the first speaker  
8 up, which will be Harvey Kitka. On deck we'll have  
9 Frederick Olsen, Jr. come up next after Mr. Kitka.

10 I'll ask the speakers to speak into the  
11 microphone, state your name and spell it for the  
12 record. It will be helpful, thanks.

13 MR. KITKA: Spell the whole name?

14 MR. VANORMER: Yes, please.

15 MR. KITKA: Good evening. My name is Harvey  
16 Kitka. I was born and raised here in Sitka, Alaska and  
17 I got to see most all the Tongass as it was before any  
18 logging really took place. We had a logging company  
19 here in Sitka, but they didn't hardly really touch the  
20 forest and it kind of went belly-up before even the  
21 roadless came into effect. Logging costs a lot of  
22 money besides that.

23 I got to watch the logging that took place in  
24 the '50s and '60s and '70s and what kind of problem was  
25 caused with subsistence. It's really great at the

1 first three or four years, then all of a sudden you  
2 might get a real bad winter. The winter kill is so  
3 tremendous.

4 It's just unbelievable how many deer we'll lose  
5 because there's no old forest to cover and shelter them  
6 in these big, wide open areas. We get anywhere from  
7 two feet to almost eight feet of snow in some spots.  
8 Where there's eight feet of snow the winter kill was  
9 really bad and really tough on subsistence.

10 Not only that, the clearcut logging that took  
11 place in a lot of places where they crossed rivers and  
12 streams that had salmon, they tended to block some of  
13 the streams off and change the direction of the  
14 streams. So we lost some of the salmon in some of  
15 these streams.

16 I know they went back and tried to redo that  
17 and straighten it all out. In the meantime the salmon  
18 had adapted to the new way the stream was, so they  
19 killed off the fish again. These are just a few of the  
20 things that we have problems with. The buffers on the  
21 streams are not enough.

22 You've got to have some old-growth forest for  
23 the deer to survive and all the other animals. Food  
24 becomes a real problem for them in the wintertime. So  
25 we need some real controls on how they log. We don't

1 want to see a complete clearcut anymore because that's  
2 too hard on our food that we collect through the  
3 winter.

4 Some of these places where they put the log  
5 dumps in kind of ruin some of our clam beds and cockle  
6 beds and some of the other seafood that we gather in  
7 different places.

8 I think that's about all I can say right now.  
9 Thank you.

10 (Applause)

11 MR. VANORMER: All right. Thank you. Next I'd  
12 like to call up Frederick Olson, Jr. On deck would be  
13 Mr. Larry Edwards. For the record, state your name and  
14 spell it, please.

15 MR. OLSEN: Okay. K'yuuhlgaansii hin uu dii  
16 kuyaang. That's capital K'Y-U-U-H-L-G-A-A-N-S-I-I.  
17 And Frederick Olsen, Jr., F-R-E-D-E-R-I-C-K O-L-S-E-N  
18 J-R. I'm a resident of Sitka. I'm not representing  
19 any particular group. I have in the past. Before  
20 moving to Sitka a year ago I was even the tribal  
21 president of the Organized Village of Kasaan, so I have  
22 a lot of experience in tribal politics.

23 I'm from Ketchikan. There used to be a spruce  
24 mill right in town right where the cruise ships land.  
25 You know, industry has changed, jobs have changed in

1 our region. This is a very complex issue and the  
2 Alternative 6 is such a simplistic solution without a  
3 problem. We don't really need this change.

4 In fact, as one of the gentlemen pointed out,  
5 this isn't a Roadless Rule anyway. That's kind of  
6 trigger language. We want it to be roadless. It  
7 sounds like -- you know, sorry to bring up these kind  
8 of words. I don't want to offend anyone, but it's  
9 like, oh, we're a bunch of hippies or something. No,  
10 this is a real issue.

11 I also object to the word subsistence in the  
12 first place because we're not here to talk about food.  
13 I'm wearing a cedar hat. We're talking about a way of  
14 life. It's not just fish that you might harvest, it's  
15 where you harvest them. Whether you're in Peril  
16 Straits or Hoonah Sound or you're out in the islands  
17 here getting herring, getting berries, this is all  
18 important.

19 We looked at the chart up here. At best --  
20 usually people going for something really paints  
21 something with rosy glasses, looking through rosy  
22 glasses. This one at best we had minimal beneficial  
23 effect. We could have major, major downsides to this.  
24 It sounds like somebody somewhere is checking a box and  
25 we have to live with this.

1           There's going to be one last boom, one last big  
2   payday and the rest of us have to pay for it for the  
3   rest of our lives and our grandchildren's  
4   grandchildren's lives. We're prioritizing logging and  
5   mining over every other industry which we know by the  
6   numbers tourism, healthcare, these are the real  
7   economic drivers in our region. Sure, logging is an  
8   industry in transition, but I guess nuance doesn't  
9   sell, so we have to paint it as roadless or Alaska is  
10  for sale. It's too simplistic.

11           There's also climate change. We have to worry  
12  about salmon habitat. It's not just trees. It's clean  
13  water. I'm very concerned about our veterans. It's  
14  possibly another way to pit Natives against other  
15  Natives because some Natives will see the flaws in this  
16  and argue for the conservation side, but yet a Native  
17  that fought and risked their life for this country  
18  might be put in a situation where they might want  
19  access to their new allotment.

20           We need the government-to-government  
21  relationship of the tribes. You know, the former  
22  Governor Hickel was once famous for saying -- I'm  
23  paraphrasing -- you can't let nature run wild. It's  
24  very ironic, but, you know what, you can.

25           This just seems like it's another way we're

1 getting our nose rubbed in this Alaska as a colony  
2 idea. I really hope the Forest Service would look out  
3 for us and not simply make excuses for industry. Are  
4 we going to be the Last Frontier or the Last New  
5 Abandoned Parking Lot.

6 Haw'aa. Gunalcheesh. Thank you.

7 (Applause)

8 MR. VANORMER: Thank you. Larry Edwards and  
9 then on deck we have Patricia Alexander. Remember to  
10 state your name, thanks.

11 MR. EDWARDS: My name is Larry Edwards. I'm  
12 the president of the Alaska Rainforest Defenders. It's  
13 a regionwide group that's been around since about 2011.  
14 We submitted 37 pages of detailed scoping comments last  
15 year and we'll be submitting detailed comments on this  
16 DEIS by the deadline. So I'm just giving brief  
17 comments tonight.

18 To be clear, we're adamant that either the no  
19 action alternative be selected or, better yet, that  
20 this rulemaking process be summarily terminated.  
21 Forest Service officials suggest that the action  
22 alternatives will merely be shifted to where logging  
23 will occur and there will be no impacts from that, but  
24 we entirely disagree with your analysis as shown up  
25 here and the lack of a distinction between the

1 alternatives.

2           The action alternatives shift logging areas of  
3 old growth instead of second growth. The roadless  
4 forests are primarily old growth. The additional loss  
5 of old growth will diminish old-growth-dependant animal  
6 populations and will harm the ability of subsistence  
7 hunters to rely on them. Only the no action  
8 alternative is pro-subsistence.

9           Also the focus on logging in roadless areas  
10 will result in more miles of road being built than  
11 otherwise per amount of timber volume. Additional road  
12 mileage is detrimental to water quality, aquatic  
13 habitat and all that depends on the productivity of  
14 those systems. The fish as well as the subsistence,  
15 commercial and sport fishing activities. Only the no  
16 action alternative is pro-subsistence and pro those  
17 other vital activities.

18           Finally, this entire rulemaking process from  
19 its very beginning with the State's petition is  
20 fundamentally baseless and corrupt. See details in  
21 Sections 1 through 3 of our scoping comments on that.

22           Briefly, false pretenses underlay Governor  
23 Walker's petition for rulemaking. It was every bit  
24 about logging, not the other reasons that were given  
25 instead. If those other reasons were true, the Chugach

1 National Forest, which has no timber industry, would  
2 also have been included. Because only the false  
3 pretenses matter to Walker, no public scoping preceded  
4 the petition.

5 Public opinion and the spirit of democracy were  
6 irrelevant to him. The blowback from that was immense,  
7 even in Ketchikan and on Prince of Wales, during the  
8 regionwide public scoping meetings last year and the  
9 blowback is just as immense in the hearings this month.

10 Please stop wasting your time and the public's  
11 funds. I appeal to the Forest Service employees  
12 listening to this and who will be reading the  
13 testimony, please resist, blow the whistle and demand  
14 that your higher-ups end this rulemaking travesty. Do  
15 it right now. Your work time and those funds are  
16 needed to plan, manage and accomplish the repair of red  
17 pipes on our streams and logged-off areas throughout  
18 the Tongass and for fighting wildfires in the Lower 48.

19 I'd just like to add one other thing. The  
20 radio story that was on today from KFSK it said that  
21 both democratic and republican gubernatorial  
22 administrations here supported changing the plan.

23 I'd just like to note that when Governor  
24 Knowles filed suit in 2001, this was a whole different  
25 place back then. That was only four years after our

1 last pulp mill closed. The whole situation is  
2 different now.

3 What's happening with President Trump having  
4 given his directive to the Secretary of Agriculture to  
5 pick the Alternative 6 is I think absolutely corrupt.  
6 It's totally contradictory to the NEPA process. We  
7 need you folks to be there with us and resist that for  
8 us.

9 Thank you.

10 (Applause)

11 MR. VANORMER: All right. Thank you. Next  
12 we'll have Patricia Alexander come on up. Then on deck  
13 we have -- I think it's Frances Brann.

14 MS. ALEXANDER: How long do I have?

15 MR. VANORMER: Around four minutes just to give  
16 time for everybody.

17 MS. ALEXANDER: I'll try.

18 MR. VANORMER: Do your best. Just make sure  
19 you state your name for the record. I'd appreciate  
20 that.

21 MS. ALEXANDER: Good evening. My name is  
22 Patricia Alexander. I grew up here in Sitka. I'm  
23 speaking tonight for myself. I have a lot of interest  
24 in this because the effect would be so long that it  
25 would affect our unborn so far. I think they have a

1 right to clean water, Native food that they would be  
2 able to garner through the forest and practice their  
3 traditional practices.

4 Any elected official in Alaska who supports a  
5 full exemption is disregarding their constituents,  
6 undermining the public process and ignoring the  
7 sovereign tribal governments. One of the things to  
8 know about Native people, Tlingits in particular, how  
9 you do something is as important as what you do.

10 These folks have come to the table and they've  
11 been dealing underhanded, under the table, and giving  
12 money for people to prepare their presentations and the  
13 tribes got nothing. It's a disrespect that permeates  
14 all through Southeast Alaska.

15 We've been stewards of this land since time  
16 immemorial. We know that the full exemption for  
17 development activities would forever harm our  
18 homelands. The Tongass National Forest is the United  
19 State's largest National Forest and the largest  
20 remaining temperate rainforest on earth.

21 It's our traditional homelands. Our ancestors  
22 are buried there. Our stories come from there. Our  
23 health, our welfare, our identity and world view are  
24 woven throughout the fabric of that land. It's not  
25 just something to make money that will be gone in a

1 jiffy and then you have nothing left.

2 Our tribes were treated as cooperating agencies  
3 instead of sovereign tribal governments that they are.  
4 That's an insult that will reverberate for years. That  
5 one does not go away. They tried to work within  
6 impossible deadlines and arbitrary deadlines. Our  
7 pleas for respect and justice have been ignored.

8 There's not a single tribal government engaged  
9 as a cooperating agency advocating for a full and  
10 complete exemption of the Roadless Rule. The entire  
11 process has repeatedly disrespected and ignored  
12 sovereign tribes, sovereign nations and their tribal  
13 citizens.

14 The USDA compensated the Alaska Forest  
15 Association, a timber industry lobbying group, \$200,000  
16 for their lobbying. The State of Alaska received \$2  
17 million. Tribes received nothing. The tribes received  
18 no compensation. Tribal leaders have been repeatedly  
19 denied opportunities to engage face to face with the  
20 U.S. Department of Agriculture, Secretary Sonny Perdue.

21 Our tribal governments have repeatedly  
22 requested government-to-government consultation. Every  
23 other branch of government does that. The Federal  
24 government does that with tribes. Do these guys got  
25 kings acts or something that they have some

1 (indiscernible) guy behind them, you know? The  
2 environmental process has been arbitrarily and  
3 capriciously rushed to decision for a decision that  
4 will affect so many generations.

5 Senator Murkowski and Governor Dunleavy support  
6 a full exemption of the Tongass from the Roadless Rule.  
7 We cannot compromise with our homelands. As the  
8 original land managers of Southeast Alaska, we know  
9 that a blanket removal of protections for remaining old  
10 growth is not a viable situation.

11 They need to meaningfully engage the tribes,  
12 the State and Federal governments, on the management of  
13 the lands that we depend on. No outcome is credible  
14 unless tribal governments are respected as full  
15 partners in the decision-making process.

16 Aatlein gunalcheesh. Thank you to all of you  
17 for standing up for this just cause.

18 (Applause)

19 MR. VANORMER: All right. I'll call up Frances  
20 Brann. Next we'll have Robin Masterman it looks like.  
21 State your name for the record.

22 MS. BRANN: My name is Frances Brann. I'm a  
23 resident of Sitka and among other things a professional  
24 woodworker. I think we've heard very eloquently from  
25 people how the exemption from the Roadless Rule would

1 be detrimental to the environment. I think what I'd  
2 like to offer is something more along the lines of a  
3 possible solution to take some of the pressure off.

4 Right now we're exporting vast numbers of round  
5 logs. This is ridiculous. We're treating our old  
6 growth as a mineral. We're mining it. We're leaving  
7 tailings in the form of clearcuts. This is not  
8 sustainable. We need to ban the export of raw logs and  
9 almost raw logs. We need to selectively cut,  
10 manufacture the timber in state, keep the jobs in  
11 state. We could make just as much money with a lot  
12 less damage.

13 If the government wants to subsidize the timber  
14 industry, then instead of punching in more roads and  
15 cutting old growth, help some of the small mill  
16 operators buy suitable equipment. Do some  
17 pre-commercial thinning on the vast quantities of  
18 second growth we have. That timber would be viable if  
19 it was treated right. Other countries in the world  
20 treat timber as a renewable resource, not as a mineral.  
21 So let's start doing that here.

22 Thank you.

23 (Applause)

24 MR. VANORMER: All right. Next we'll have  
25 Robin Masterman come on up and then behind that looks

1 like Bob Sam on deck. Be sure to state your name for  
2 the record and spell it out. That would be great.

3 MS. MASTERMAN: Robin Masterman, R-O-B-I-N  
4 M-A-S-T-E-R-M-A-N. I attend Mt. Edgecombe and I live  
5 in Chugiak. From my understanding the Chugach National  
6 Forest was included into the area to be exempt from the  
7 Roadless Rule without the people of Chugiak or any  
8 local tribes being aware of it. My family uses our  
9 National Forest to camp and for other recreational  
10 activities.

11 Also, as a Mt. Edgecombe student, I and many  
12 others use the Tongass Forest for various activities to  
13 feel more welcome while away from home and to maintain  
14 success with our education.

15 Exempting the Tongass and Chugach National  
16 Forests from the Roadless Rule will cause massive  
17 repercussions that haven't even been considered. I  
18 believe that leaving both the Tongass and the Chugach  
19 National Forest in the Roadless Rule is critical to  
20 maintaining our spiritual and cultural identity as well  
21 as slowing the effects of climate change.

22 Thank you.

23 (Applause)

24 MR. VANORMER: Thank you. Next we'll have Bob  
25 Sam come on up and then on deck we'll have Marian

1 Allen.

2 MR. SAM: Thank you. My name is Bob Sam. I  
3 was born and raised here in Sitka, Alaska. I spent my  
4 whole life living on what you know as the Tongass  
5 National Forest. The Tongass Forest to me is no  
6 different than Noah's Ark. If you look from space, the  
7 Tongass looks just like a boat. We are a people who  
8 have never left the ark. All our food, our way of  
9 life, all comes from the Tongass Forest.

10 I grew up here thinking that the Tongass is  
11 such a strong, vibrant land, but I now realize how  
12 fragile it is. We are living in a time of Anthropocene  
13 where human beings think that they can manipulate  
14 nature, where they can make major decisions regarding  
15 nature. That is so wrong because the mindset of the  
16 Tongass management is cutting timber. That is  
17 narrow-minded to only cut timber.

18 There's so much to offer here. Our way of  
19 life, the oxygen that these trees provide and salmon is  
20 in every single tree. Every plant has salmon. All the  
21 human beings in this room has salmon. We are a salmon  
22 forest.

23 Washington state no longer has salmon and the  
24 forest is falling down. We still have salmon here. We  
25 have an opportunity to do it differently. That's why

1 we live here, to breathe the air, to live our unique  
2 way of life and the world needs this forest and it  
3 needs it intact.

4 Special forest products is another way to use  
5 this forest where it can totally self-sustain itself.  
6 If you cut these trees, there's no self-sustaining  
7 life. More people are leaving Southeast Alaska than  
8 coming in because there's no -- our way of life is  
9 disappearing.

10 I have only four minutes to protect the life  
11 that I hold dear, to catch the fish and the animals and  
12 the deer and the mountain goat. We should be allowed  
13 two days of testimony. We should be allowed to sit  
14 here all night long and the Forest Service should stay  
15 and listen to every single one of us. Four minutes is  
16 not enough time.

17 My time is up. I have to stop now. It's my  
18 way of life. I can't live on Ruffles, hamburgers,  
19 french fries, potato chips. Those things make me fat  
20 and unhealthy. I would love to share deer with my  
21 grandsons, to catch a king salmon. It is not necessary  
22 to build a road when so many of our mountains are  
23 falling due to climate change. You build a road, those  
24 mountains are going to fall. The landslides are going  
25 to destroy those roads because roads cannot survive in

1 our climate.

2 Thank you.

3 (Applause)

4 MR. VANORMER: Marian Allen. All right. Then  
5 on deck we have Cora Dow will be next.

6 MS. ALLEN: My name is Marian Allen,  
7 M-A-R-I-A-N A-L-L-E-N. I support the no action  
8 alternative. I am submitting written testimony, but  
9 for this subsistence hearing I just wanted to make a  
10 very simple statement, which is that I depend upon the  
11 bounty from the sea and I spend a lot of time  
12 collecting in areas from Goddard Hot Springs up to  
13 Peril Strait. It would be a crime to take Hoonah  
14 Sound, Ushk Bay and Poison Cove out of LUD II status.

15 The Tongass, this area provides a place for  
16 spiritual renewal as well and retreat into wilderness,  
17 which is so rare in this time and so important. Not  
18 only for the people who have been here for 10,000 years  
19 or more but any person who can access its solitude. I  
20 depend on that greatly too. It's a part of subsistence  
21 survival.

22 Thank you.

23 (Applause)

24 MR. VANORMER: All right. Thank you. Next is  
25 Cora Dow and then behind her will be Joel Markis. Be

1 sure to state your name for the record. Thanks.

2 MS. DOW: First of all I would like to thank  
3 you for this opportunity to speak. My name is Cora  
4 Dow, C-O-R-A D-O-W. I'm a senior at Sitka High School  
5 and my family relies on a subsistence lifestyle that  
6 would be greatly affected by Alternative 6.

7 The justification used by the Department of  
8 Agriculture is that logging will provide economic  
9 benefits and that roads for the logging will connect  
10 communities; however, both of these are completely  
11 inaccurate.

12 First of all the Tongass economy is not  
13 dependent on logging. It's dependent on fishing.  
14 According to the SeaBank annual report, seven out of  
15 the top 100 fishing ports by value in the entire  
16 country are Southeast Alaska and communities. Sitka  
17 seafood port alone makes a net value of \$75,400,000 and  
18 is ranked as number 10 in the country. A huge amount  
19 of this value depends on intact watershed.

20 Also subsistence fishermen rely on fish for a  
21 huge portion of their food. My family depends on  
22 subsistence hunting and fishing every year as do most  
23 families in Southeast Alaska. Why would we trade  
24 people feeding their families for access to old-growth  
25 timber for out-of-state logging companies.

1           In addition to being dependent on fishing,  
2   tourism makes up a large portion of Southeast Alaska's  
3   economy. Southeast Alaska hosts two-thirds of all  
4   state visitors making it the most visited region in the  
5   state.

6           The Southeast Conference's 2017 annual economic  
7   report identified the tourism industry as Southeast  
8   Alaska's top private sector industry in terms of both  
9   jobs and wages. Pristine and remote locations are the  
10   basis of this entire industry. No one wants to come to  
11   Southeast Alaska to drive down a logging road, boat  
12   past giant clearcuts or wade through polluted waters.  
13   Our economy is dependent on the protection of our  
14   intact wilderness.

15           Lastly, I would like to dispel a point that the  
16   USDA keeps using. Removing the Roadless Rule will not  
17   provide more opportunity to harvest energy or connect  
18   communities. There are exemptions under the current  
19   Roadless Rule for clean energy connecting communities,  
20   hatcheries, utilities and even mining. Fifty-seven  
21   projects under these exemptions have been proposed and  
22   none have been rejected.

23           Additionally, the Draft EIS itself states that  
24   logging roads will be decommissioned after use, so even  
25   those roads won't be of any use to the public for

1 subsistence hunting or other uses. The only possible  
2 justifications for passing the full exemption are  
3 extremely short-sighted. We need to take into account  
4 our unique economy and subsistence needs and protect  
5 our forest to the fullest extent possible.

6 Thank you.

7 (Applause)

8 MR. VANORMER: All right. Joel Markis and then  
9 after that Owen Kindig.

10 MR. MARKIS: Good evening. My name is Joel  
11 Markis, J-O-E-L M-A-R-K-I-S. I'm a fisheries professor  
12 at the University of Alaska Southeast and the president  
13 of the Alaska Chapter of the American Fisheries  
14 Society.

15 The American Fisheries Society is the world's  
16 oldest and largest professional fisheries organization.  
17 We're dedicated to strengthening the fisheries  
18 profession, advocating fisheries science and conserving  
19 fisheries resources. Our membership boasts over 8,000  
20 members nationwide. Everything from fisheries  
21 managers, ecologists, sociologists, engineers, social  
22 scientists, aquaculturists. We have a vast membership.

23 The Alaska chapter was founded in 1971. We  
24 have between four and five hundred members in our  
25 chapter and we're one of the largest chapters across

1 the country. The main focus that we have as an  
2 organization is promoting scientific research and  
3 sustainable management of fisheries resources.

4 We published leading fisheries journals and  
5 renowned books. We encourage education and  
6 professional development of fisheries professionals and  
7 students and we advise policy with respect to fisheries  
8 science, management and conservation.

9 So we are in the process of reviewing the Draft  
10 Environmental Impact Statement submitted by the Forest  
11 Service and the proposed alternatives contained within  
12 and we'll be submitting formal comments based on the  
13 scientific merits of that Draft Environmental Impact  
14 Statement based on the scientific merits and the  
15 impacts with respect to fish and fish habitat. We'll  
16 be submitting those in writing.

17 Tonight I want to speak in general just a  
18 little bit about the impacts to subsistence fisheries.  
19 Subsistence fisheries are extremely important in  
20 Southeast Alaska and especially to rurally qualified  
21 residents. These resources are for the most part  
22 robust and healthy and this is largely due to intact  
23 freshwater habitat. Eighty percent of this freshwater  
24 habitat is contained within the Tongass National  
25 Forest. These fisheries resources that are managed

1 within the Tongass are managed using the best available  
2 science and management practices.

3 So we encourage the Forest Service and  
4 Secretary Perdue to not ignore the inevitable impacts  
5 that road building and resources extraction will have  
6 on fish habitat and these critical fisheries  
7 subsistence resources. These impacts have been well  
8 documented in the scientific literature and those  
9 impacts will be outlined in the comments that we're  
10 providing written.

11 Kind of lastly we encourage the Forest Service  
12 and Secretary Perdue to put science first when  
13 evaluating and reviewing the impacts to fish and fish  
14 habitat with respect to these subsistence fisheries  
15 resources.

16 Thank you.

17 (Applause)

18 MR. VANORMER: Next is Owen Kindig. I saw a  
19 little note on here that said yes but later. So maybe  
20 he'll be coming back. He's not here. So next I'd like  
21 to call up Linda Danner. Is Linda Danner here?

22 MR. DABROWSKI: I think she left.

23 MR. VANORMER: Okay. I'll move on to Douglas  
24 Dabrowski.

25 MR. DABROWSKI: That would be me.

1 MR. VANORMER: All right. Then after that it  
2 looks like Erie Jordan.

3 MR. JORDAN: Eric.

4 MR. VANORMER: Oh, Eric. I'm sorry. You'll be  
5 next up on deck. To start state your name for the  
6 record and we'll go from there.

7 MR. DABROWSKI: Hi. My name is Douglas  
8 Dabrowski. That's D-A-B-R-O-W-S-K-I. I've lived in  
9 Sitka for 25 years. I've been commercial fishing for  
10 more than 20 years of that time. Most of my food comes  
11 from subsistence and I simply don't find it believable  
12 that logging 165,000 acres of old growth will have zero  
13 impact on our fisheries. Just not believable.

14 So what I want to know is if the logging  
15 companies are going to bail us out when our fish stocks  
16 collapse. Are we going to be left with muddy rivers  
17 with no salmon or what? The politicians that are  
18 pushing this they don't live here, they don't care.  
19 All they care about is bribes and kickbacks from the  
20 timber lobby.

21 I'm opposed to any change in the Roadless Rule.  
22 It's not broken, don't fix it.

23 (Applause)

24 MR. VANORMER: All right. Eric Jordan come on  
25 up. Just make sure you state your name and then let me

1 see. We have Darby Osborne will be up after that.

2 MR. JORDAN: My name is Eric Jordan. I was  
3 born in Wrangell, Alaska. I've lived all my life in  
4 this forest. Thank you. I want you to notice how easy  
5 it is to get our wonderful local Forest Service agents  
6 to help us. Thank you for putting (indiscernible).

7 (Applause)

8 MR. JORDAN: For the record, I'm opposed to the  
9 exemption. I favor the no action alternative. But,  
10 folks, this process is a sham. Not your words, not  
11 your testimony, but the fact that this administration  
12 in Washington, D.C. and Juneau, Alaska are going to  
13 ignore your comments and you should be outraged.

14 These employees have to hear us and my comment  
15 to you is the whistle needs to be blown on the  
16 trampling of years of research and public comment and  
17 suffering that we've had to endure from the industrial  
18 clearcut logging industry.

19 I can put it in a national magazine that I  
20 believe aliens have taken over some of our top  
21 administration officials because no reasonable human  
22 being with a heart could make the decision to reopen  
23 the Tongass to roading when we already have thousands  
24 of miles of road and the Forest Service themself has  
25 documented hundreds of streams that need to be fixed.

1 Why would any reasonable agency or person advocate  
2 building and damaging more of the Tongass until they  
3 fix the damage that's already been done.

4 So what I predict based on years of testimony  
5 at meetings like this and that are wonderful comments  
6 -- and, boy, have I heard some great comments today --  
7 are going to be ignored and this Administration with  
8 the aid of the Dunleavy Administration are going to go  
9 ahead and exempt the Tongass from the Roadless Rule and  
10 we should be outraged and do whatever it takes to vote  
11 him out of office, to blockade the new roads or  
12 whatever, because you are being ignored, folks. Mark  
13 my words.

14 President Trump and the Dunleavy Administration  
15 and every one of our Congressional Delegation is going  
16 to support exempting the Tongass and it is wrong.

17 I make my living catching salmon from the  
18 Tongass, most of them. And it hurts my income as the  
19 logging industry has damaged the streams, particularly  
20 for cohos which are a big part of my income.

21 It breaks my heart that we cannot as a human  
22 species learn from the mistakes we've already made that  
23 are well documented on damage to our deer habitat, our  
24 deer populations, our salmon creeks and now, as we're  
25 facing global climate catastrophe, we need those old

1 trees to provide the shelter for those salmon streams,  
2 to help keep the waters cool.

3 My heart is broken for you, but let's not give  
4 up. Let's redouble our efforts. Let this outrage  
5 motivate us to act and not just speak or whatever it  
6 takes to vote him out of office, blockade those roads.

7 (Applause)

8 MR. VANORMER: All right. Thank you. Next  
9 I'll call Darby Osborne and on deck we have Will  
10 Peterson. Just remember to state your name for the  
11 record.

12 MS. OSBORNE: First of all I would just like to  
13 say thank you so much for allowing me the opportunity  
14 to speak and share my perspective on these current  
15 issues. My name is Darby Osborne, that is D-A-R-B-Y  
16 O-S-B-O-R-N-E, and I am a sophomore currently attending  
17 Sitka High School.

18 I was born in Sitka and I have lived here my  
19 entire life. Growing up in Southeast Alaska I have  
20 lived in surroundings far different than most other  
21 kids my age and received an education catered to  
22 learning about the environment and learning about the  
23 surroundings that we, as a region, have grown so  
24 dependent upon.

25 From dissecting salmon in fourth grade to

1 finding phytoplanktons in sixth and testing our local  
2 water pH in seventh, I have been able to learn more  
3 about the intricate web that our entire Southeast  
4 ecosystem has grown so dependant upon and is so  
5 intertwined in.

6           Through all the classes that I've taken the one  
7 thing that was stressed above all others was the  
8 importance of maintaining balance in this web. We were  
9 always taught to look at our surroundings as a big  
10 picture, not just singular elements. When you cut down  
11 a tree, you are not just cutting down one tree. You  
12 are affecting every aspect of the ecosystem that that  
13 tree belongs in.

14           When considering alternatives for roadless,  
15 what I ask of you is to think about that big picture  
16 and think about the effects that cutting down one of  
17 our greatest national resource would have because,  
18 contrary to the presentation, I severely doubt that the  
19 impact of it would be minimal to moderate.

20           At the end of the day the fact still stands  
21 that the entire case for exempting the Tongass from  
22 roadless rests on shortsighted and wholly underwhelming  
23 economic benefits. I'm sorry, but I am not willing to  
24 trade my future and the future of everyone who subsists  
25 off this land for simply brief economic benefits.

1 I want our policies to support our environment  
2 and I want the policy-makers to understand that  
3 everything is so closely interconnected within this  
4 ecosystem. Everyone living in this region is dependent  
5 upon the health of our environment and policy-makers  
6 need to understand that you cannot mess with something  
7 as large and powerful as the Tongass and expect no  
8 consequences.

9 It is because of this and the fact that I  
10 support our industries and want a sustainable future  
11 that I am strongly in support of Alternative 1. Thank  
12 you for your time.

13 (Applause)

14 MR. VANORMER: All right. Next we'll have Will  
15 Peterson and on deck will be Sonya Smith.

16 MR. PETERSON: Hello, my name is Willoughby  
17 Peterson, W-I-L-L-O-U-G-H-B-Y P-E-T-E-R-S-O-N. (In  
18 Tlingit). My Tlingit name is Goon Nax Jid Dee. I'm  
19 not going to spell that out. I'm of Raven Moiety. I'm  
20 of the Coho Clan. I'm a child of the Wooshketaan, the  
21 Shark Clan. I was born and raised in Sitka, Alaska.

22 I received a bachelor's degree in environmental  
23 engineering from the University of California Irvine in  
24 2013 and have worked my entire adult life to  
25 understand, protect and restore the natural

1 environment. With my experiences, both cultural and  
2 scientific, I'm here today to tell you e must not  
3 exempt this Tongass National Forest from the 2001  
4 Alaska Roadless Rule. I recommend a no action  
5 alternative for the management of Alaska's forest.

6           The forest will manage themselves just fine.  
7 They have since time immemorial. The Tongass truly is  
8 one of the last relatively untouched corners of this  
9 world. It provides me with everything I need. I  
10 harvest berries, cedar bark, hemlock branches, tea  
11 leaves, devils club, mushrooms, salmon and many other  
12 resources from the Tongass and Baranof and Chichagof  
13 Islands.

14           The entire region of Southeast Alaska provides  
15 my family with food and resources. Don't get me wrong,  
16 I know logging is necessary to an extent. I also  
17 realize that is just one paradigm I subscribe to. I'm  
18 also willing to adapt my lifestyle to one that is more  
19 sustainable to the environment. That is something we  
20 must do collectively. Standing here today is one step  
21 in that direction.

22           When the world is in a state of confusion, it  
23 is imperative that we slow down and think rationally  
24 for a moment. This decision isn't a matter of going  
25 back if we mess up. If we let go of these protections

1 today, 50 years from now our old-growth forest will be  
2 history. If you don't think it can happen today, some  
3 politician will sneak up on us and do it tomorrow. We  
4 must resist outside forces and listen to the people who  
5 are the caretakers.

6 The rainforests of this planet provide the  
7 world with the ability to eat, shelter and breathe  
8 clean air. If you plan to continue to eat, breathe and  
9 survive, please select no action.

10 Gunalcheesh. Thank you.

11 (Applause)

12 MR. VANORMER: All right. Next we'll call up  
13 Sonya Smith and on deck we have Matthew Jackson. Be  
14 sure to state your name for the record.

15 MS. SMITH: My name is Sonya Smith and my last  
16 name is spelled S-M-I-T-H. My Tlingit name is  
17 ShoolNik. I am not for the exemption at all. Enough  
18 has been said about the ways of life that people have  
19 been talking about generously. That one word has a  
20 common ground for anyone who has had any experience  
21 here in Southeast and that word is subsistence.

22 I want people to know and understand one thing  
23 about Southeast Alaska and that is its people. These  
24 ways of life have been taught traditionally. I have  
25 been taught traditionally. Haida means people of the

1 land. Tlingit means people of the tide. Tsimshian  
2 means people of the salmon. We have a holistic view  
3 that is being affected corporately.

4 This industry that is such a threat to us needs  
5 to continue to be a threat and I agree with our elder  
6 who spoke earlier, Jordan, we should be outraged by  
7 these decisions. This is going to impact us for  
8 generations to come. This forest that we've lived in,  
9 that we've taught.

10 I also want to say that my Tlingit name  
11 actually ties me to the lands where I come from. The  
12 first part of it talks about the clan I'm from, which  
13 is the Kaach.adi. The Kaach.adi are the raven sockeye  
14 from Kake. Keex' Kwaan. The second part of it talks  
15 about the legend of the salmon and the salmon need the  
16 harvesting beds in order for the life cycles to  
17 continue.

18 That's what my name means. My name means that  
19 I continue to bring that life cycle wherever I go. I  
20 can start that new lifecycle. I work in a job with  
21 youth and I believe this. I believe very much in this  
22 generational name-giving.

23 It's really important for me to emphasize that  
24 these ways of life that we have we're working against a  
25 delegation of Congress who have no mercy on us.

1 They're not going to have any mercy on us. I don't  
2 care how much they brag about jobs.

3 We've seen corporate failures in my lifetime.  
4 I've seen it. Millions and millions of dollars worth  
5 of waste sitting in our communities. Sitting in heap  
6 piles of nothing being done to it. All kinds of things  
7 could be done to recycle all of that waste.

8 But I believe that people need to start working  
9 together. We need to start talking about how this is  
10 going to impact us directly.

11 Enough with technology. This is a people  
12 issue. This is not a technology issue. It's really  
13 upsetting to me to think that this can be wiped out.  
14 Our ways of life can be wiped up. The way I grew up  
15 can be wiped out. It can be erased.

16 I'm not real happy with the politics of this.  
17 I plan on submitting written testimony about it too.  
18 I'm working with as many people as I possibly can to  
19 get this done. This is not a job. This is a value.  
20 The more people who speak up about it the longer it's  
21 going to delay their process. This is an industrial  
22 matter and we can stop this wheel.

23 Thank you.

24 (Applause)

25 MR. VANORMER: All right. Thank you. Next up

1 is Matthew Jackson and then on deck we have -- it looks  
2 like Tava Guillory. Come on up.

3 MR. JACKSON: Hello. My name is Matthew  
4 Jackson. I want to begin by saying that I know this  
5 Roadless Rule issue is the result of political  
6 pressures from high up in the State and Federal  
7 Administrations and that I know and respect the people  
8 and the work of our local Forest Service team. I'm  
9 testifying so you can pass this on up the chain of  
10 command and hopefully have an impact because I know  
11 that you value the public process.

12 The topic is subsistence and I want to talk a  
13 little bit about effort, the amount of effort we have  
14 to put in because that's a critical component of  
15 subsistence management, the effort that we put in on  
16 this Roadless Rule issue.

17 More than 90 percent of the comments in the  
18 last comment period preferred the no action  
19 alternative. We've already had this discussion. We  
20 just reached a reasonable, hard-fought compromise in  
21 the 2016 Tongass Land Management Plan. So I've got to  
22 wonder out loud why the Administration is wasting their  
23 effort on this issue and wasting our time and effort  
24 fighting this issue.

25 The Forest Service paid the Alaska Forestry

1 Association, which is essentially two logging companies  
2 based on Prince of Wales Island, \$200,000 for their  
3 input into this process. The Forestry Association  
4 employs about 250 people. That's \$800 per employee to  
5 solicit their input. Not a dime went to tribes.

6 But you don't have to pay real Southeast  
7 Alaskans to come out and tell us how we feel. More  
8 than 100,000 comments have been made by Southeast  
9 Alaskans against Alternative 6 and in support of  
10 keeping the Roadless Rule the way it is. Hundreds of  
11 hours of testimony against the Roadless Rule and the  
12 Tongass Land Management Plan. So I've got to wonder  
13 why the Administration continues to waste their effort  
14 and waste our effort on this issue.

15 The Forest Service has many important missions  
16 to accomplish; adapting for climate change, cleaning up  
17 the mess from old-growth logging, protecting the fish  
18 and wildlife habitat. Every dollar and every hour  
19 spent on this issue is time away from this other  
20 valuable work, both for the Forest Service and for the  
21 public.

22 Everyone in this room would rather be at home  
23 with our loved ones than out here tonight, but we're  
24 making the effort to protect our Tongass National  
25 Forest and I think that that's an important subsistence

1 issue. So please start listening to our voices and  
2 quit wasting everyone's time and effort and keep the  
3 Roadless Rule the way it is.

4 (Applause)

5 MR. VANORMER: All right. Next we have Tava  
6 Guillory, if I'm saying that right, and then Zach  
7 LaPerriere will be next after that.

8 MS. GUILLORY: Hello. My name is Tava  
9 Guillory. That is spelled T-A-V-A G-U-I-L-L-O-R-Y.  
10 First I would like to thank you for allowing us to  
11 speak here tonight. It is incredibly important that  
12 you hear what the people of this region have to say  
13 because we are the people who this truly affects. I  
14 hope that this overwhelming backlash from our  
15 communities is carried back to Washington, D.C.

16 I am 16 and I'm a junior at Sitka High School.  
17 I believe that alternative 1, no action, is the best  
18 option. The Roadless Rule is incredibly important for  
19 environment and for our people. By opening the Tongass  
20 up for road building we are allowing for opportunities  
21 for old-growth logging, which would harm our fish, our  
22 habitat and our people. Especially the people who  
23 subsist off the land.

24 My family and I appreciate the fish we catch,  
25 the deer we hunt and the berries we pick. We are

1 benefitted so much every year by this beautiful land we  
2 live in and the wonderful Tongass Forest, which would  
3 be harmed by any of the Alternatives 2-6.

4 I would say that all of these alternatives are  
5 going to harm all of the people in Southeast who use  
6 this land to their benefit completely because no matter  
7 if you're Native or if you're just an Alaska we all use  
8 this land because we all love this land and we all love  
9 the people around us and the trees around us and the  
10 fish.

11 Even if you don't hunt and fish you still  
12 experience it every day and that's something that's so  
13 special about the Tongass. I don't think many people  
14 really appreciate that who don't live here in this  
15 amazing forest because they don't understand the effect  
16 it has. The effect on the people who come here who  
17 just say, oh, my goodness, this is so beautiful.

18 That is the reason we have a tourism industry.  
19 That is the reason we have all of this money coming in  
20 is because this is a beautiful, beautiful place and  
21 it's so, so special. Opening this up for logging is  
22 going to be short term and it's not going to benefit  
23 our people and it's not going to benefit our economy as  
24 a whole.

25 I think that's completely detrimental. It's

1 detrimental to the people who thrive off the land.  
2 It's detrimental to the people who want to come and  
3 experience such a natural place because that doesn't  
4 happen often anymore.

5           Again, climate change is such a huge issue  
6 nowadays that it is incredibly important that we  
7 continue to take every single bit of forest we have and  
8 we care for it because the logging of old-growth forest  
9 is simply going to harm our future generations. It's  
10 going to stop our future generations from being able to  
11 subsist off our land. It's going to stop future  
12 generations from coming to visit our land and  
13 experiencing that beauty.

14           So, with that, I implore you, please, please,  
15 think and choose Alternative 1 because this is our  
16 forest and we need to preserve it the best we possibly  
17 can.

18           Thank you.

19           (Applause)

20           MR. VANORMER: All right. Next we have Zach  
21 LaPerriere and it looks like Cheston Clark would be on  
22 deck.

23           MR. LAPERRIERE: Thanks. Good evening. My  
24 name is Zach LaPerriere. I appreciate the opportunity  
25 to speak. For the record, I'm a professional

1 woodworker. I have been all my adult life and I'll  
2 save my comments for the written comments, but I  
3 strongly support a small-scale timber industry and I  
4 think that we actually can have a future for a  
5 small-scale timber industry. I'm strongly in favor of  
6 the no alternative proposal.

7 So regarding subsistence, my family is what I  
8 jokingly refer to as grocery store vegetarians, which  
9 means that we simply do not buy meat. I have three  
10 boys, two teenagers and a 10-year-old who thinks he's a  
11 teenager. In the food department, it's a vital part of  
12 our family, subsistence. It's not just fishing and  
13 hunting, it's also gathering.

14 So I'm here to say that I think that  
15 subsistence is actually the most important part of our  
16 economy in Southeast Alaska. It doesn't generate  
17 dollars, but as far as I'm concerned, as it has been  
18 for thousands of years, it is the number one most  
19 important part of our economy.

20 So as part of this process we were told to name  
21 our favorite subsistence areas, but I just want to  
22 point out that I think that is completely ludicrous.  
23 You know, it's kind of like who's your favorite  
24 relative. I mean come on, folks. Subsistence areas  
25 have actually expanded in the last decade. I think

1 anyone who has lived in Southeast for a long time knows  
2 that their favorite spots that maybe people used to go  
3 out to in small skiffs just on a small-scale basis  
4 today are way, way busier.

5 I'm just thinking into the future. So what  
6 happens if rate charges continue to double as they have  
7 in 15 years. What happens if the barges stop running.  
8 If we want to think about food security, we have food  
9 security in this region and it's called our forests.  
10 The forests provide for so, so, so, so much.

11 I support the full Roadless Rule as written in  
12 2001. Just full disclosure, I'm also a logger. I do  
13 harvest on a small scale old-growth trees,  
14 predominantly dead ones. And I'm just going to come  
15 out and say that I think it is past time to completely  
16 abolish and end industrial-scale old-growth logging.  
17 There is absolutely no reason to be exporting round  
18 trees to China as most of it is. So there's ample room  
19 in my view for both subsistence and a small-scale local  
20 timber industry.

21 I mean let's just look at the numbers since  
22 1959 when the first pulp mill fired up. Roughly half  
23 of the commercially-viable timber has already been  
24 logged. So that's 60 years. That's my parents'  
25 lifetime. So how are we going to continue that? We

1 simply can't. As far as I'm concerned, opening up the  
2 Roadless Rule is nothing more than just a timber grab  
3 by large corporations.

4 I'm tired of corporate warfare, but I'm going  
5 to keep my comments to subsistence and just say that  
6 once old growth is logged that habitat does not return.  
7 So that is our principal that we can continue to rely  
8 on for year, so I fully support keeping the Roadless  
9 Rule intact and keeping our subsistence as it is.

10 Thank you.

11 (Applause)

12 MR. VANORMER: All right. Next we have Cheston  
13 Clark and on deck we have Steve Fish.

14 MR. CLARK: Wow, some of the testimonies from  
15 some of the young people around here are amazing.  
16 Appreciate those. My name is Cheston Clark,  
17 C-H-E-S-T-O-N C-L-A-R-K. I am in support of no action  
18 on changing the Roadless Rule. I feel that removing  
19 the Roadless Rule will expose our forest to corporate  
20 greed and will not allow enough protection for our  
21 watersheds, especially our salmon streams and our deer  
22 habitat.

23 Lifting the Roadless Rule puts us at a bipolar  
24 politics and divides us into categories. We are all  
25 subsistence, whether commercial fishing or dipnetting.

1 We all fall under these categories. Corporate greed is  
2 ruling over us and that needs to stop. Please keep the  
3 Roadless Rule in place.

4 Thank you.

5 (Applause)

6 MR. VANORMER: All right. We have Steve Fish  
7 and then on deck it looks like Charlie Wilbur.

8 MR. FISH: Thanks. My name is Steve Fish,  
9 S-T-E-V-E, and I think even a computer can spell my  
10 last name.

11 (Laughter)

12 MR. FISH: I moved to Alaska from somewhere  
13 else about 45 years ago and have never really looked  
14 back. I've looked back on my loved ones, my family  
15 that I left, but this has always been my home since I  
16 was 19 years when I came here. Lived in Petersburg,  
17 Port Alexander, Prince of Wales and Sitka. Spent most  
18 of this time commercial fishing, but I've also worked  
19 on tug boats, mostly towing logs. Worked a long winter  
20 in a sawmill. Worked around the timber industry.

21 My wife and I have raised three children here  
22 mostly in Sitka, all of whom have deep connections to  
23 this land. Our oldest daughter is now teaching her own  
24 children how to value and take care of this place.

25 Subsistence hunting and fishing are at least

1 partly responsible for our family's good health, both  
2 physically as well as in our hearts and minds. I think  
3 this gets spoken to too little, is the intrinsic  
4 benefit of wilderness and the importance of it to our  
5 culture, to our species and just our all around  
6 well-being.

7 I myself have been active. Up and down both  
8 sides of Baranof Island, locally from Kelp Bay and,  
9 like Zach said, I agree, I shouldn't have to list all  
10 my favorite spots. Don't want to make those choices,  
11 but I just love it all here. I've never been to a  
12 place in Southeast I didn't like, but I particularly  
13 like Baranof Island.

14 These are all valuable haunts I would like to  
15 continue to be protected with the roadless designation.  
16 I support Alternative 1, no change. It should stay  
17 like it is. For subsistence users everywhere we need  
18 high water quality standards, clean healthy salmon  
19 streams, and intact old-growth habitat over large areas  
20 to protect the health of entire ecosystems, all the way  
21 from the mountaintop to the estuaries.

22 Keeping the Roadless Rule will help get the  
23 Forest Service to take care of the existing roads in  
24 the Tongass. We can do thinning again. There's a lot  
25 of things we can do. People need jobs. We shouldn't

1 have to subsidize industries to employ a few people and  
2 export our ancient forests to another country where  
3 they can reap the profit.

4 There are allowable exemptions within the  
5 Roadless Rule allowing some road building. That's not  
6 really an excuse that we can't do anything. Keep up  
7 with the transition to smaller scale second growth  
8 logging. Leave our irreplaceable ancient forest intact  
9 and alive for the good of us all forever.

10 I didn't take this seriously enough. I wrote  
11 pretty quick comments. I really appreciate all the  
12 comments and all the heartfelt things that I've heard  
13 here tonight.

14 Thanks.

15 (Applause)

16 MR. VANORMER: All right. Next I have Charlie  
17 Wilber.

18 MR. WILBER: Charlie Wilber, yeah.

19 MR. VANORMER: Excellent. Then Mary Barrett  
20 will be on deck.

21 MR. WILBER: Thank you for being here. The  
22 testimony I've heard tonight has been probably the most  
23 heartening thing I've heard and the reason why I'm here  
24 really. I'm kind of going off script. Especially the  
25 younger people I've heard here give very impassioned

1 reasons for their life with the Tongass.

2 I'm so happy to see the young folks because  
3 this battle that we're facing right now. It didn't  
4 just start today. It didn't happen a year ago. This  
5 has been going on since Teddy Roosevelt first formed  
6 the Forest Service. It's going to keep going on long  
7 after I'm gone.

8 When I hear the young people give such  
9 impassioned speech, I have some confidence that they  
10 will still maintain the pressure because the pressure  
11 from the developers and the loggers is always going to  
12 be there. So thank you for your testimony.

13 I'm here to explain my strong support of the  
14 Roadless Rule as it is. Make no changes or  
15 alterations, please. The Tongass provides my  
16 livelihood, our family's food and our restoration. Did  
17 I say restoration? That's recreation. It is  
18 restoration also.

19 I'm a 40-year commercial fisherman out of Sitka  
20 dependent on the Tongass. Our family eats venison and  
21 salmon for subsistence foods. Our recreating is done  
22 camping and hiking all over the place, different  
23 beaches. This is what we're here for. This is what we  
24 live for.

25 In salmon, habitat is everything. You can't

1 have a decent salmon fishery if you don't have the  
2 habitat to support it. While hunting I've observed  
3 firsthand the damage already done to Starrigavan,  
4 Nakwasina, Saint John Baptist, Fish Bay, Ushk Bay, Fit  
5 Cove, many others, and Peril Straits and Hoonah Sound.  
6 It baffles me why we would spend a lot of taxpayer  
7 money to resurrect an archaic, dying industry that  
8 gains short-term profit by doing long-term damage to a  
9 non-renewable resource, that is old-growth timber.

10 Again, I urge you to make no changes to the  
11 existing Roadless Rule. Let's not endanger the fragile  
12 growing economy of Southeast based on tourism,  
13 healthcare, commercial fishing, charter fishing and  
14 tourism.

15 Thank you.

16 (Applause)

17 MR. VANORMER: Thank you. Next up we have Mary  
18 Barrett and then Marsh Skeele will be up next. It's  
19 all yours.

20 MS. BARRETT: My name is Mary Barrett, M-A-R-Y  
21 B-A-R-R-E-T-T. I live and gather berries in the  
22 immediate Sitka area. I'm not going to tell you that I  
23 go to this area or that area seeing this impact or not.  
24 It is not up to me to prove that Alternative 6 is  
25 wrong, but it is up to you, the regulatory agencies, to

1 prove to us why no action needs to be changed at all.

2 I support the no action alternative because I  
3 care about the largest temperate rainforest in the  
4 United States. I have been listening to people  
5 passionately testifying to protect their way of life.  
6 I have nothing to add to that.

7 What is wrong with this process is that the  
8 burden of proof to protect our subsistence is now on  
9 the citizen. This is wrong. Truly the burden of proof  
10 that our subsistence will not be harmed should be on  
11 the regulatory agencies, the forest Service, the USDA  
12 and the business interests and politicians behind  
13 opening the Roadless Rule to this needless process.

14 Why does the timber association get fees for  
15 testimony, their expertise, and I don't. I'm an expert  
16 too, as are you, the other citizens.

17 I also have a problem with referring to our  
18 temperate rainforests as something to, quote, harvest,  
19 unquote. Our forest is not a crop of corn. It is not  
20 an agribusiness monoculture, which is the business of  
21 the USDA. Rather, it is a rich habitat with a  
22 diversity of trees, shrubs, providing shelter for  
23 animals and the birds, some of which only nest in old  
24 growth.

25 We have lost a billion birds since 1970 and

1 that breaks my heart. The word, quote, harvest does  
2 not belong in the Forest Service vocabulary and is a  
3 business word and not respectful. It is not applicable  
4 to the natural web of life.

5 I am also very concerned about climate change  
6 and carbon sequestration. The analysis that we were  
7 given is full of economic jargon, but there is no way  
8 to quantify in dollars the value of keeping carbon in  
9 trees and not fragmenting habitat with roads.

10 I am not an economist, but it is obvious you  
11 are baffling the citizen with economic bullshit.  
12 Climate change is not about economics but about the  
13 very quality of our life and our future. Speaking of  
14 economics, why should I, as a U.S. taxpayer, want to  
15 subsidize roads for the timber industry in my public  
16 lands when the Forest Service has historically lost  
17 money on the roads built in the past. That makes no  
18 economic sense.

19 So the regulatory agencies, our politicians and  
20 the business interest behind them need to prove to us  
21 that our environment won't be harmed and you have  
22 failed. Our forest is not a harvest but a diverse  
23 habitat and don't provide economic jargon for priceless  
24 value of old growth.

25 Thank you.

1 (Applause)

2 MR. VANORMER: All right. You must be Marsh.  
3 This next name I apologize. I'm trying to get these  
4 right.

5 MR. SKEELE: Tachi Sopow.

6 MR. VANORMER: Thank you. Tachi Sopow. Maybe  
7 you could help me with the rest of these. That will be  
8 be up next though.

9 MR. SKEELE: Hi. My name is Marsh Skeele,  
10 M-A-R-S-H S-K-E-E-L-E. I rely on Tongass for my  
11 economy, but I'm here to talk about subsistence. I  
12 think everyone that spent time in the woods here it's  
13 the reason you're a Sitkan. It's the reason why you  
14 choose to live here.

15 We could all live other places, but this place  
16 is special and it's hard to put an economic value on  
17 that, but having a population of people here. It's the  
18 reason we're here. From deer to healthy salmon streams  
19 to any -- picking berries, all kinds of wild gathering.

20 I think as a -- with the changing ecosystem,  
21 with the changing ocean temperatures that we have this  
22 great resource of healthy forest and we need to keep  
23 those intact or else there's no reason to be here.

24 Thank you.

25 (Applause)

1 MR. VANORMER: Tachi. All right. Next up  
2 we'll have Heather Bauscher. All yours.

3 MR. SOPOW: Hello. My name is Tachi Sopow,  
4 T-A-C-H-I S-O-P-O-W. I didn't prepare a statement  
5 tonight, but I just wanted to add my voice. This is a  
6 very special place and many people have stated that.

7 The other perspective that I'm offering is  
8 while I've lived here for 15 years and I enjoy all the  
9 subsistence benefits and recreation benefits, I'm also  
10 born and raised in British Columbia and I've seen  
11 firsthand the devastating impact that large-scale  
12 forestry and mining that has gone mostly unchecked has  
13 on fishing and hunting opportunities and commercial  
14 fishing and clean drinking water and all the rest. I  
15 also think it's really important.

16 Others have commented on this, but the value  
17 that -- the intrinsic value and the value for our human  
18 soul and psyche to be able to look around -- and I know  
19 this area is not completely untouched, but to be able  
20 to look around and not see that devastation and that  
21 impact from human greed is very valuable and important.

22 I think it's very unfortunate that we need to  
23 have laws to keep greed in check, but we do, so I  
24 support the no action on the Roadless Rule, Alternative  
25 1.

1 Thank you.

2 (Applause)

3 MR. VANORMER: Next we have Heather Bauscher  
4 and then Allycia Witherspoon will be on deck. Just  
5 remember to state your name and spell it out. Thanks.

6 MS. BAUSCHER: Okay. Thank you. Hi. My name  
7 is Heather Bauscher, H-E-A-T-H-E-R B-A-U-S-C-H-E-R. I  
8 support no action. I'm a subsistence user here in  
9 Sitka. I rely on salmon, deer, berries, mushrooms,  
10 like many of the others in this community and in this  
11 room.

12 There are few places left in the world where we  
13 can have a life such as this connected in the way that  
14 we are to the land and the sea. It's this way of life  
15 and it's this community that has kept me here. I'm  
16 originally from Pennsylvania, which has seen its share  
17 of resource extraction through oil, through coal, and  
18 then Marcellus Shale before I left. I've seen acid  
19 mine drainage and the pollution of our rivers and did  
20 not grow up eating the fish in the rivers because at  
21 the minimum there was too much mercury in them and I do  
22 not want to see these things happen to the Tongass.

23 I'm not anti-timber or anti-development. I  
24 believe there are responsible ways to harvest our  
25 resources and I believe we should be investing in the

1 pre-commercial thinning and the transition to second  
2 growth that we've been working on for years rather than  
3 investing in this process and trying to go backwards to  
4 old growth.

5 I do not feel that Alternative 6 reflects  
6 responsible management of our forest or our resources.  
7 I truly do commend the work of the Forest Service staff  
8 and this team to try and create something nuanced and  
9 unique for this region that would work for all of us as  
10 was promised during the scoping period and I'm saddened  
11 to see all of that work essentially thrown in the  
12 garbage with the selection of Alternative 6 and the  
13 blanket removal of these protections which creates this  
14 all or nothing deal.

15 It almost feels like every time we get close to  
16 reaching collaborative reasonable solutions, like with  
17 the TLMP in 2016 and now this, it gets thrown out by  
18 somebody from very far away that has no idea what it's  
19 like on the ground.

20 We are resourceful, collaborative people here  
21 in Southeast and undoing that collaborative work does  
22 nothing but undermine, polarize and divide us, which  
23 makes us weak.

24 In the presentation earlier I heard the Forest  
25 Service try to say that the impacts would be equal

1 regardless of the chosen alternative and I've heard a  
2 number of justifications for this. I've heard the  
3 statement because the Forest Management Plan would not  
4 change, but these plans get reviewed every 10 to 15  
5 years. So nothing actually prevents that plan from  
6 being changed and everything being opened up after the  
7 roadless protections are removed.

8 I've heard the justification that there would  
9 be no impacts to fisheries because there are stream  
10 buffers, yet stream buffers do not replace intact  
11 watersheds or ecosystems. The most frustrating piece  
12 that I see was that chart that says like minimum impact  
13 no matter what and I've heard the analysis that all the  
14 impacts are equal because the amount of timber does not  
15 change. I feel like it's a very inappropriate  
16 assessment of the ecology of Southeast Alaska and I  
17 think this represents a problem of scale.

18 You're viewing the whole region as the same  
19 everywhere and that everything is equal, but anyone on  
20 the ground here in Southeast Alaska knows that the  
21 islands are different, the watersheds are different.  
22 There's different animals, there's different  
23 biodiversity and different places and you can't just  
24 take from over here to replace over here and think that  
25 that will work and that's going to have very

1 significant impacts to subsistence resources from  
2 community to community.

3 I feel that this view of the ecological impacts  
4 is completely inappropriate and at the very least  
5 should have been broken down by Ranger District or more  
6 ideally by community or even by watershed.

7 I've recently attended the Southeast RAC  
8 meetings and I've regularly traveled to various  
9 communities across the region and I've been incredibly  
10 inspired at the ways people all over and diverse  
11 stakeholders have come together to hold ground right  
12 now and I'm moved and inspired and grateful to all the  
13 people that have spoken here tonight and how we  
14 continue to come together.

15 We all rely on these resources to feed our  
16 families, fill our freezers and fill our souls. Please  
17 keep these roadless protections in place for the  
18 benefit of all of us.

19 Thank you.

20 (Applause)

21 MR. VANORMER: Next we'll have Allycia  
22 Witherspoon. Come on up. Then on deck we have  
23 Adelaide Poulson. Please state your name and spell it  
24 for the record when you start. Thanks.

25 MS. WITHERSPOON: Okay. Hi. My name is

1 Allycia Witherspoon, A-L-L-Y-C-I-A  
2 W-I-T-H-E-R-S-P-O-O-N. I'm here representing myself  
3 and my family, which is my two children and my husband,  
4 who is currently subsistence hunting right now. I am  
5 extremely nervous right now. I don't have a big speech  
6 or anything.

7 I just want to say that I am in total support  
8 of the Roadless Rule and.....

9 CHILD: Is your name Allycia?

10 MS. WITHERSPOON: My name is Allycia, yes.  
11 Thank you.

12 (Laughter)

13 MS. WITHERSPOON: And that I am here with my  
14 two kids, which you've probably been hearing, because  
15 this is very important. I support the no action. I  
16 like the Roadless Rule exactly like it is. Thank you.

17 (Applause)

18 MR. VANORMER: All right. We have Adelaide  
19 Poulson coming up and it looks like Libby Stortz will  
20 be up next. Come on up.

21 MS. POULSON: Hello. My name is Adelaide  
22 Poulson. That's A-D-E-L-A-I-D-E P-O-U-L-S-O-N. First  
23 off I'd like to say how thankful I am for the  
24 opportunity to speak.

25 The amount of people that have spoken already

1 shows the importance of this issue and demonstrates  
2 that the people that live on this land should be the  
3 ones that get to decide what happens to it. After  
4 listening to everybody before me say that they don't  
5 want Alternative 6, I think it's pretty clear what the  
6 people want to happen.

7 About an hour ago me and some students were  
8 talking to one of our teachers about the possibility of  
9 debating this issue in class, but our teacher's  
10 response to that was there wouldn't be any points for  
11 the other side.

12 You can see subsistence in the daily lives of  
13 everyone in Sitka. Families enjoy fish, berries,  
14 venison and more. Hunting and gathering in Alaska has  
15 existed since time immemorial and it's such a  
16 significant part of everyone's lives that it makes no  
17 sense to harm the environment that allows us to live in  
18 that way.

19 It is logical that if you cut down all the  
20 trees in an area, especially the old-growth trees,  
21 animals, the environment, and even us people will  
22 suffer. First of all, animals do not want to live in  
23 an area that has no trees. It's as simple as that.

24 People may claim that the roads produced  
25 because of the exemption will provide more ways for

1 people to harvest, but the reality is that these roads  
2 will be closed after their purpose as access to logging  
3 locations is fulfilled.

4 People also may claim that Alaska will profit  
5 from increased logging. In reality, the profit from  
6 logging is minimal, if existent at all, and the  
7 majority of the money doesn't come back to us Alaskans.  
8 Even if we do have some economic benefit, it is in no  
9 way worth ruining our environment and therefore our  
10 futures for.

11 Furthermore, Alaska has a thriving tourism  
12 industry. If people are worried about making money,  
13 they shouldn't cut down our beautiful trees and make  
14 our landscape ugly because the tourists have come to  
15 see the beautiful nature of Alaska, not to see  
16 old-growth trees cut down.

17 Communities all around our state will not  
18 profit in any way from Alternative 6. The environment,  
19 animals and the people's ability to provide for  
20 themselves and their families through subsistence will  
21 suffer.

22 Thank you.

23 (Applause)

24 MR. VANORMER: Libby Stortz coming up and  
25 Britainy Wright will be on deck. Thanks.

1 MS. STORTZ: My name is Libby Stortz, L-I-B-B-Y  
2 S-T-O-R-T-Z. I've been in Sitka 31 years. I'm here  
3 representing my own views but I'm also channeling my  
4 husband William as best I can. The forest is my  
5 solace. It's been a source of life for us and for me  
6 since losing William.

7 Our food, fish, game, berries, plants,  
8 recreation, our clean air, sequestration of carbon in  
9 our forest intact. We have good economic drivers in  
10 fishing and tourists who come to see our beautiful  
11 wilderness and wildlife. I now rely on the kindness of  
12 others who make it possible for me to have the bounty  
13 of subsistence.

14 I'm opposed to the logging of the Tongass. We  
15 don't need more roads. We will be hurt by more roads  
16 and more logging in more ways than is imaginable. I  
17 thank so many of my fellow Sitkans for expressing our  
18 pain and anger over this evil attempt to destroy our  
19 home and planet and our treasure.

20 No action is the best action. Thank you.

21 (Applause)

22 MR. VANORMER: All right. Next we have  
23 Britainy Wright and then on deck it looks like Linda  
24 Behnken.

25 MS. WRIGHT: Hi. My name is Britainy Wright,

1 B-R-I-T-A-I-N-Y W-R-I-G-H-T. I'm a Sitka resident, a  
2 subsistence fisher and forager, as well as an avian  
3 care specialist. I'm also an avid supporter of voting  
4 for Proposal 1, which is no action.

5 Nature has always astounded me. It was  
6 actually the beauty of Baranof that brought me here in  
7 the first place, as well as the wildlife. What we have  
8 here in Southeast Alaska is particularly incredible and  
9 amazing. That's the largest temperate rainforest in  
10 the world, the Tongass National Rainforest.

11 From the top spires of these towering  
12 old-growth trees to the lush understories this forest  
13 provides the most wealth to this community hands down.  
14 It provides us with clean air, clean water, a bounty of  
15 food and a perfect habitat for many unique species,  
16 some which are found nowhere else in the world.

17 With the irresponsible management and  
18 clearcutting of this rainforest we will see devastating  
19 destruction that will last centuries. Old growth,  
20 believe it or not, is a non-renewable resource and  
21 takes hundreds of years to regrow.

22 Many species here rely specifically on these  
23 old-growth forests to live and nest, such as Bald  
24 eagles and the threatened Marbled murrelets, and even  
25 songbirds like Hermit thrushes. Like it had been said

1 earlier, each year these bird populations have been  
2 steadily declining. So why add another reason why  
3 we're going to lose more of these.

4 On top of that its invaluable habitat for bear  
5 and deer, which many people I know rely on to fill  
6 their freezers. Salmon and herring also rely on clean,  
7 intact watersheds to survive that are provided by these  
8 forests.

9 As we strip away these trees, we are going to  
10 strip away countless habitats. If we lose these fish,  
11 we lose invaluable income and jobs, subsistence fishing  
12 and, more importantly, an invaluable way of life for  
13 many, many people. We also lose a way to feed our  
14 families and friends. And for what? A shortsighted  
15 plan to help the dying timber industry and some roads  
16 that are going to cost us, the taxpayers, billions of  
17 dollars.

18 I implore you all to think long and hard about  
19 the people and wildlife who will be directly and  
20 adversely affected from wiping out this ancient forest.  
21 No action is truly the best action to take in regards  
22 to the Tongass National Rainforest.

23 So let's stand up together as tall as those  
24 old-growth tree stands to support the Roadless Rule,  
25 the last wild salmon fisheries and our natural way of

1 life. Thank you.

2 (Applause)

3 MR. VANORMER: All right. Next is Linda  
4 Behnken and Katherine Howard will be on deck. Thanks.

5 MS. BEHNKEN: Thank you for this opportunity to  
6 speak. Linda Behnken representing the Alaska Longline  
7 Fishermen's Association.

8 I'm not going to limit my comments to  
9 subsistence because in this town it's all woven  
10 together. Subsistence, commercial fishing, subsistence  
11 uses of the forest, subsistence uses of the ocean. I'm  
12 not following their rules because I don't think those  
13 rules are fair to this community.

14 Our organization represents fishermen that live  
15 in almost every community in Southeast Alaska. They  
16 all benefit from the Tongass. They all depend on the  
17 Tongass and depend on the fisheries that are fed by the  
18 Tongass.

19 Before talking about the value of these  
20 resources, I wanted to just briefly comment on the  
21 process. As others have said, for decades hundreds of  
22 us have participated in the management process of this  
23 forest and again and again come to the recommendation  
24 for roadless protection, for wilderness protection, for  
25 protecting intact ecosystems to protect the economy of

1 all of us who live here.

2 Just two years ago a very diverse group of  
3 stakeholders once again decided that the roadless areas  
4 should be off limits. I would urge all of you that are  
5 here today, everyone who is working on comments, to not  
6 stop with submitting those comments to the Forest  
7 Service, but to make sure those comments go to our  
8 congressional delegation and that they go to the  
9 governor of this state.

10 What becomes increasingly obvious to me is that  
11 the Forest Service or those who are directing the  
12 Forest Service cannot see the forest for the trees.  
13 Where the Forest Service sees board feet, we see a  
14 complex forest ecosystem. In fact, the largest  
15 temperate rainforest in the world, host to 14,000 miles  
16 of anadromous salmon habitat, 12,000 square miles of  
17 estuarine habitat, 20,000 lakes, 40,000 miles of river.

18 We see one of few largely intact forest  
19 ecosystems remaining on the planet. We see an  
20 extremely productive bioregion rich in natural capital,  
21 forest, rivers, estuaries that return goods and  
22 services every year, year after year, to residents and  
23 to visitors alike provided we don't destroy the forest  
24 for the trees.

25 To provide a sense of some of the values of

1 those goods and services Southeast, the Tongass is the  
2 state's largest salmon-producing region in terms of  
3 volume with over 53 million salmon returning every  
4 year. That's 24 million more than return to Bristol  
5 Bay. Annual commercial fishery dividends from the  
6 Tongass include 300 million pounds of seafood per year,  
7 10,000 jobs, 700 million in total economic impact on  
8 Southeast communities.

9           The Tongass lakes and rivers are worth an  
10 estimated 363 million in fishery and recreational  
11 assets and regulating services. The Tongass coastal  
12 wetlands provide 22.3 billion in ecosystem services.  
13 In sum, the 11 million acres of Tongass Rainforest  
14 annually provision 13 billion in ecosystem services,  
15 which include water regulation, clean air, wildlife,  
16 fish habitat and carbon sequestration.

17           Again, all of that value depends on taking care  
18 of the natural capital that supports it. Why would we  
19 risk all of that for an industry that's been subsidized  
20 since 1982, which is the year I came to Sitka, to the  
21 tune of \$1.5 billion.

22           The Forest Service is now again proposing to  
23 exempt the National Forest from the Roadless Rule. As  
24 I said earlier, the FEIS that was done in 2000 clearly  
25 documented the impacts of logging on fish habitat of

1 increased sediment, degraded water quality, habitat  
2 fragmentation and high temperature regimes. Road  
3 construction and inventoried roadless areas will  
4 contribute to habitat loss.

5           There are currently 1,100 stream crossing  
6 mostly filled culverts that the Forest Service has not  
7 been able to repair since those happened that are  
8 currently serving as small dams blocking 250 miles of  
9 important salmon spawning habitat.

10           The recent EIS, which informs this decision,  
11 notes that roads pose the greatest risk to fish  
12 resources on the Tongass, then goes on to claim that  
13 exempting the Tongass from the Roadless Rule in all  
14 alternatives would have negligible impacts on fish  
15 habitat.

16           To my mind that's a statement that's at best  
17 unsubstantiated if not disingenuous. Piecemealing what  
18 those impacts could be and trying to ignore the overall  
19 impact does not in any way dismiss what the impacts  
20 will be to the fisheries, to the forest or to our ways  
21 of life.

22           I know that my time is up. We have submitted  
23 scoping comments. We will be submitting extensive  
24 comments on this environmental impact statement. I  
25 certainly urge all of you to do so. I just want to say

1 that we very clearly support the no action alternative.

2           There has been some push for Alternative 2,  
3 some offering that as some kind of compromise. Our  
4 review of Alternative 2, most of the streams that  
5 support our coho fisheries, our sockeye fisheries,  
6 fisheries depend on pink salmon, so the same fisheries  
7 depend on streams that are not included in Alternative  
8 2. They're mostly streams from Prince of Wales Island  
9 that includes two-thirds of the streams that are most  
10 important. The highest salmon habitat for our  
11 fisheries.

12           In closing, I'd just say we've been frustrated  
13 that we're revisiting this again. We've been through  
14 this over and over in the time that I've lived here.  
15 We'll count on the young people to continue to fight  
16 this fight, but clearly there's only one solution for  
17 the Tongass and that's Alternative 1, the no action  
18 alternative.

19           Thank you.

20           (Applause)

21           MR. VANORMER: Thank you. All right.

22 Katherine Howard. I'll try and make this comfortable  
23 for you. Would you like to hold the mic? Can I clip  
24 this to you?

25           MS. HOWARD: Yes, sir.

1 MR. VANORMER: Okay. Thank you, ma'am.

2 MS. HOWARD: (Indiscernible) Kwaan, Tree  
3 People. I am a descendant of Elizabeth Popovich,  
4 Walter Sokolov, Paul James, Sr., and all the others who  
5 went to Washington, D.C., and already put up pristine  
6 Tongass ballads and words from all over Alaska.

7 I am here not as myself. This is not me  
8 speaking. It's not I. Gunalcheesh everyone who is  
9 here to speak for the Tree People. I mean we go all  
10 the way back to the crucifixion. What held up Jesus.  
11 Cedar. What was the food that they ate. It was all  
12 from the land.

13 This is not a fight that we started. There's  
14 only three types of people in this world. There's  
15 biblical, there's religious and there's secular. What  
16 is secular? People who don't believe in God. What is  
17 religious? People who do things repetitively that is  
18 being told what to do.

19 And then biblical people, God's people, they do  
20 it by their own thoughts. That they're going to stand  
21 up or do something first on their own. We're not being  
22 told. We decide on ourselves and our heart and our  
23 mind and our soul and our body. We love it all with  
24 our heart, mind, soul and body. That's what makes us  
25 come from time immemorial.

1           So when you are speaking from the elders, you  
2 always know. Take care of the old person that you are  
3 going to become, children. There's a lot of you up  
4 there speaking tonight. Being a Lorax with us. First  
5 it was Happy Feet. Now we're being a Lorax. What's  
6 next? How many other cartoons have to come to light  
7 before we even watch what's going to happen next.

8           We already know. It's already been written and  
9 published. I just wanted to say thank you again for  
10 speaking up for the Tree People because they were there  
11 for us as well as they were there for Jesus and he was  
12 there for us first and that's what was the first love  
13 that we're fighting for right now because we were shown  
14 that first love first.

15           Now Washington, D.C. will hear and see the  
16 blood that was left for us because it's already bought  
17 and paid for. I stand for the Tree People. As I wear  
18 this coat, I thank them that I get to eat, I get to see  
19 and I get to breathe and I get to be one with all of  
20 you.

21           Now the children, they're going to need that  
22 pureness. They're going to want it. They're going to  
23 crave something that we can't give to them anymore  
24 because we're going to fail each other. It's only God  
25 that can hold us up, you know.

1 I don't know how else I can put it, but read  
2 the Book of Matthew. They talk about food, they talk  
3 about pristineness, they talk about pure thoughts,  
4 going to bed happy, waking up happy. What does that  
5 really mean though?

6 I just want to say thank you, children, for  
7 being a Lorax again because my grandfathers and all the  
8 other grandfathers and all of them they already fought  
9 for this one time. Here we are again in 2019.

10 2020 is going to be the sight and view and  
11 everybody will get to see and everyone will get to  
12 breathe and everybody will get to eat. I believe it  
13 because that first love was shown to me by my  
14 grandparents. It is not I that speaks. It's the Tree  
15 People.

16 Thank you.

17 (Applause)

18 MR. VANORMER: Thank you very much. All right.  
19 Next we'll have Blake LaPerriere. I'm just going to  
20 kind of do a time check here. We're getting all sorts  
21 of late submissions. Our time period is definitely  
22 going to be bumping into the 9:00 o'clock period. I'll  
23 be keeping it to four minutes. I'll be happy to stay  
24 all night as long as these keep coming in. I just want  
25 people to be warned we may be going after 9:00 o'clock

1 just with some of the late submissions here.

2 All right. It's all yours. Make sure you  
3 start by stating your name for the record.

4 MR. LAPERRIERE: Thank you. My name is Blake  
5 LaPerriere. It's spelled B-L-A-K-E  
6 L-A-P-E-R-R-I-E-R-E. I'm a senior in high school and  
7 I've lived in Sitka all my life. I was born here and  
8 raised. For as long as I can remember I've been eating  
9 and harvesting subsistence foods from Sitka Sound and  
10 the surrounding areas.

11 Old-growth forest, pristine salmon streams,  
12 clean oceans and intact ecosystems have made this  
13 possible. Deer, salmon and all the other animals that  
14 my family depends on needs intact old-growth forest to  
15 survive. The current Roadless Rule protects old-growth  
16 forest and it prohibits destructive roads from being  
17 built in much of the intact Tongass.

18 For these reasons I support the no action  
19 alternative and I think that opening up the Tongass to  
20 logging would be one of the most detrimental and  
21 destructive things we could do.

22 Thank you all for your time.

23 (Applause)

24 MR. VANORMER: Thank you. All right. Next we  
25 have Simon Hook and then on deck we have Helen Dangel

1 it looks like. Simon.

2 MR. HOOK: Hello. My name is Simon Hook,  
3 S-I-M-O-N H-O-O-K.

4 I have the opportunity to work in tourism and show  
5 people this beautiful place. The first time I came  
6 here was about 14 years ago. I said wow.

7 If we were to remove the Roadless Rule, that  
8 would take away from tourism. We spent a lot of money  
9 on tourism to get people here, to be here to see this  
10 place because this place is so beautiful. It keeps  
11 making people say wow.

12 Subsistence is very important as well to me and  
13 I subsist all throughout Southeast Alaska. Every port  
14 I'm in, every place I go in Southeast, all the way from  
15 Metlakatla all the way to Yakutat, we have an  
16 opportunity to get off the ship and pick berries, be  
17 out in the woods, be out there in an intact forest.

18 Keeping the forest intact is important for  
19 tourism because people go through next to Vancouver  
20 Island and they see clearcuts and it makes them sad.  
21 They don't say wow on Vancouver Island. They say  
22 gross.

23 So in order to support places like this, wild  
24 foods, wild salmon, deer, bears, whales, all that  
25 stuff, the connection to the forest is very close to

1 that of the ocean to keep those places intact and those  
2 places wild, we have to keep the roads off of those  
3 forests.

4 I support Option 1, keep the forest intact, the  
5 trees and the ground and the animals and the forest.

6 Thank you.

7 (Applause)

8 MR. VANORMER: All right. Thank you. Next is  
9 Helen Dangel and then it looks like Peter Ve or Peter  
10 Vu will be up next. It's all yours, Helen.

11 MS. DANGEL: Good evening. My name is Helen  
12 Dangel, D-A-N-G-E-L, like angel. My Tlingit name is  
13 *Aklí*. That was my great-grandmother's name. I'm Tlingit,  
14 *Kaagwaantaan áyá xát* (Translated: I am of the Kaagwaantaan  
15 clan.) *Kiks.ádi dachxán áyá xat*. (Translated: I am a  
16 grandchild of the Kiks.ádi clan.) So I'm from  
17 the Kaagwaantaan Clan and I'm a grandchild of the  
18 Kiks.ádi. My family is all from Sitka. They're the  
19 white part of course, but even then we've been here a  
20 couple generations. My maternal line goes back to time  
21 immemorial.

22 I wanted to say that I'm a weaver. I both do  
23 basketry and I do wool weaving, which comes from our  
24 land. It's traditional art. I harvest cedar bark,  
25 spruce roots, berries, traditional plants for use. I  
26 fish. My sons, who are both teenagers, they fish for  
27 salmon, rockfish, halibut. My sons go hunting now that

1 they are old enough. We use the land.

2 Again, it's important. It's all important. I  
3 can't say a specific place. It's like an elder I  
4 worked with long ago, he said in a book that all  
5 species of salmon are important, even the pinks. They  
6 are still really good fish. And all of the forest is  
7 really important.

8 I want to pass along my traditions of weaving.  
9 Spruce roots you can only get certain kinds. They're  
10 only in certain areas. Cedar bark. The yellow cedar  
11 is dying out around here. That might be due to climate  
12 change. Nonetheless, if we're clearcutting those  
13 resources, they're not going to be replaced.

14 I also want to say that I'm here for those  
15 people who are not here. I'm here for those people who  
16 are suffering from anxiety. We all probably -- most of  
17 us have stage fright, but there are people with  
18 crippling anxiety out there who can't come up. People  
19 with depression. People who work two or three jobs. My  
20 Native people.

21 All those people out there. The clerks from  
22 the grocery stores. Those people on swing shift and  
23 night shift. Those people who have five children at  
24 home and can't get out. Those people who have less  
25 opportunity. I'm here for them. I'm here because

1 they're probably suffering the consequences of historic  
2 trauma. That trauma that is in part from our land  
3 being taken from us.

4 Tlingit-ani. I think that's really important  
5 because the Tlingits were one with the land and we  
6 didn't own the land. The land owns us. I think that's  
7 important. You can't just take something and harvest  
8 it. You are borrowing the land. You never can own it.

9 I want to say that those who spoke about  
10 subsistence and all so passionately, whether you're  
11 Native or not, I really appreciate it. Gunalcheesh.  
12 Because I think when people do that, when they have  
13 subsistence, it's more than subsistence. Subsistence  
14 implies that it is barely sustaining, scraping along.

15 But we have a rich land. That is what has  
16 drawn people here with our vastness of salmon,  
17 everything you can get in the forest, everything you  
18 need to survive, our deer, and that sustains us. It's  
19 more than that. We are the People of the Tides. We  
20 settled here because this land is so rich.

21 I want to say that those people are also  
22 connected to the land. Doing that, harvesting, being  
23 here connects them to the land. So you are also owned  
24 by this land. I think that Alaskans are different than  
25 the rest of the U.S. and the rest of the world because

1 we are so close to the land.

2 So I'm going to say that I support the no  
3 action alternative. We don't need additional roads.  
4 All the government subsidies on road building has never  
5 equaled out to what is actually taken from this land.  
6 That is all I have.

7 Gunalcheesh.

8 (Applause)

9 MR. VANORMER: All right. Thank you. So we're  
10 going to have Peter Vu come up next. I've got about  
11 eight of them left here. The time is now 9:00 o'clock,  
12 so I'm not going to accept any more slips, but we'll go  
13 through these eight testimonies here for the remainder  
14 of the evening. Sound good?

15 MR. VU: Yeah.

16 MR. VANORMER: All right. Thanks. State your  
17 name and spell it for the record, please.

18 MR. VU: Hi. My name is Peter Vu. That is  
19 P-E-T-E-R V-U. I hope to speak to your pathos this  
20 evening, which is probably inadvisable as I've been  
21 told that the Forest Service is most focused with  
22 specific concerns regarding subsistence. But I think  
23 that there's far more at stake here than subsistence.

24 I do not hunt or fish, but I certainly know  
25 many who do. I recreate in the Tongass. I hesitate to

1 use the word recreate because it does not quite capture  
2 what the Tongass means to me. You cannot quantify how  
3 much the Tongass has contributed to my development as a  
4 human being or the people I have come to know while  
5 living here. We are better people. We are more  
6 connected and many have stayed and raised their  
7 families here. Not because of the economic prosperity  
8 of Southeast, but of the many layers that envelope our  
9 hearts.

10 When I wander through old-growth forest, I look  
11 at all the trees that have grown large and wide, their  
12 branches stretching out, holding all of those memories  
13 I can only begin to fathom. I imagine the hundreds of  
14 seasons of rain and snow and wind beating against these  
15 trees. The ones still standing have endured it all and  
16 the ones that have not have fallen, but they are far  
17 from wasted. New life grows upon them and the  
18 complexity and the beauty of the forest continues to  
19 grow.

20 Again, I reiterate you cannot quantify the  
21 sentiment for myself nor for any one of the people I  
22 know the Tongass has deeply affected and enriched.

23 When governments speak about subsistence, it  
24 seems they are most concerned about resources.  
25 Something we can extract and utilize. While the Forest

1 Service is very aware of the cultural and economic  
2 necessity of subsistence, they are bound to its  
3 adherence only through Federal regulations. This is  
4 only the beginning of a much needed conversation.

5 I support the no action alternative to the  
6 Roadless Rule and I insist that we contemplate needs  
7 much deeper and more human than economic development.

8 Thank you.

9 (Applause)

10 MR. VANORMER: All right. Thank you. Next up  
11 we have Hope Merritt and then on deck we're going to go  
12 to Owen Kindig again and see if Owen is back. Hope  
13 Merritt.

14 MS. MERRITT: Hi. My name is Hope Merritt,  
15 M-E-R-R-I-T-T. I just wanted to express my feelings on  
16 this and my family's as well. We are avid subsistence  
17 users. Most -- I would say the majority of the food in  
18 our house comes from the Tongass.

19 On a given year we're going to harvest anywhere  
20 from Dorothy Narrows up to Appleton or maybe over North  
21 Arm, you know. We move around. Wherever we're  
22 harvesting seaweed, kelp, beach asparagus, king, coho,  
23 sockeye, berries, spruce tips, mushrooms.

24 Beach asparagus has also been a livelihood for  
25 me. For over a decade I've been harvesting it

1 commercially and bringing it here to local markets. I  
2 notice when I'm harvesting, when I get to where there  
3 has been a logging road put in, the patches just stop.  
4 They're done.

5           There's a lot of beach asparagus, especially in  
6 Hoonah Sound, but where I can harvest commercially is  
7 really specific and I return to the same spots every  
8 year. If one of those spots were chosen, it would be  
9 real devastating to my business and to our livelihood  
10 because it's a big subsistence food for us too and  
11 trading stock. So it's not just feeding myself, I  
12 trade a lot of other protein and foods from that.

13           Just going to places again, it's mostly north  
14 of town where I'm getting beach asparagus, but  
15 definitely all through Hoonah Sound and up there around  
16 Baby Bear, Poison. Nakwasina is a very precious  
17 hunting ground and everywhere is.

18           You can't harvest or hunt where there's been  
19 clearcuts, so I support the no action to the Roadless  
20 Rule.

21           (Applause)

22           MR. VANORMER: All right. Has Owen made his  
23 way back?

24           (No response)

25           MR. VANORMER: Okay. Linda Danner.

1 (No response)

2 MR. VANORMER: Okay. Let's skip that one.  
3 Jolie Tulley. Next on deck would be Jeffrey Kelly.

4 MS. TULLEY: Hi. My name is Jolie Tulley,  
5 J-O-L-I-E T-U-L-L-E-Y. I support Alternative 1 or no  
6 action. Since I moved here three years ago the Tongass  
7 has become vital to my way of life and the people I've  
8 come to love in the Southeast.

9 As one gold miner from Juneau, who was here in  
10 October of last year and instrumental to the  
11 development of the alternatives to the Roadless Rule,  
12 put it when I asked her why we need roads in the  
13 wilderness, she told me the Tongass needs to be  
14 handicap accessible.

15 This is exemplary of the contemptuous spirit  
16 with which public comment has been steamrolled on this  
17 issue. Don't let floundering politicians sell our  
18 collective backyard for a quick buck.

19 Thank you.

20 (Applause)

21 MR. VANORMER: Jeffrey Kelly up next. Then  
22 Andrew Thoms.

23 MR. KELLY: Hi. I'm Jeffrey Kelly,  
24 J-E-F-F-R-E-Y K-E-L-L-Y. I've lived in Sitka for 44  
25 years and raised a family on what I consider a

1 semi-subsistence lifestyle. We have stores here and we  
2 can purchase food. We choose to harvest as much as we  
3 can from the forest. I support the no action option to  
4 the Roadless Rule.

5 As I understand it, what we're talking about  
6 tonight is an Alaska-specific exemption to the Roadless  
7 Rule. And, as I understand it, the Department of  
8 Agriculture has embraced a full exemption and that  
9 can't be based on subsistence. That would be an  
10 economic decision to embrace a full exemption and we're  
11 being asked to speak in terms of subsistence tonight,  
12 but I do think that they can be related as we'll see.

13 Anyway, Alaska, interestingly, is either the  
14 only one I know of or one of the very few locations  
15 that really allow subsistence harvest and the  
16 subsistence lifestyle in the first place. So having an  
17 Alaska-specific exemption to a Roadless Rule is very  
18 pertinent to the subsistence lifestyle that we have.

19 Building roads in an old-growth forest will  
20 compromise the subsistence way of life. That's pretty  
21 clear. I worked a full career for the Alaska  
22 Department of Fish and Game, Commercial Fisheries  
23 Division, and as I understand it in the State there's a  
24 subsistence priority use of resources in our state. I  
25 believe that that's a constitutionally-mandated

1 subsistence priority. So any commercial use of  
2 resources, any sport fish or sport use, even guided  
3 trips, can only take place if the subsistence needs are  
4 satisfied first.

5 So, again, it's interesting that an  
6 Alaska-specific exemption would be promoted in a place  
7 where there is a subsistence priority use of the  
8 resources.

9 Sustainable ecotourism is compatible with  
10 subsistence use. So here comes the economic end of it.  
11 There are many other economic factors that pertain to  
12 the Tongass Forest that ecotourism particularly is  
13 compatible with subsistence use, which we're talking  
14 about now.

15 The rules have changes in the last three years.  
16 This is a new era because the prevalence of forest  
17 fires, wildfires, throughout western North America and  
18 the Interior of Alaska have changed the opportunities  
19 for ecotourism elsewhere. So many of the Parks, many  
20 of the National Forests, thousands of acres, are no  
21 longer an option for people to go to who have  
22 ecotourism desires.

23 But they can come here and they will continue  
24 to come here because this is a rainforest and it's not  
25 going to burn. It's not going to burn like the other

1 places. There may be fires, but for the foreseeable  
2 future we're in the unique position to host ecotourism.

3 In closing, I'd like to say in compatibility  
4 with subsistence use what do you think a Japanese or a  
5 German eco-minded tourist would pay to see an  
6 undisturbed old-growth forest 10 years, 20 years, 50  
7 years from now? What would they pay to see that? It's  
8 phenomenal opportunity compared to the short-term gain  
9 that we would have from logging.

10 All the other things that go along with that  
11 economically just to get them here to support the  
12 people and to allow us to continue our subsistence way  
13 of life would all be intact. That decision though is  
14 at hand and very imminent.

15 Thank you.

16 (Applause)

17 MR. VANORMER: All right. Next up Andrew Thoms  
18 and then Marcel LaPerriere. I think that's going to be  
19 read by Blake. So that will be up next.

20 MR. THOMS: Thanks for the chance to comment  
21 and thanks for coming to Sitka for this meeting. I  
22 just want to express gratitude for everybody's  
23 testimony. You all heard a lot here from Sitka.  
24 Especially thanks to the elders who came out for this  
25 and especially thanks to Harvey Kitka and his role on

1 the Subsistence Advisory Council here regionally and  
2 for speaking up, and especially gratitude to the youth  
3 for all the testimony they gave.

4 I'm kind of scared that the Forest Service is  
5 not going to listen to a lot of that testimony because  
6 this is a subsistence hearing and I would request to  
7 Chad and Frank that you all include that full  
8 transcript that you're going to get transcribed into  
9 the regular comments for this process so that we don't  
10 get any of the subsistence comments that weren't to do  
11 with subsistence disregarded because I think that you  
12 heard a lot of important things here and I hope that  
13 all of that is considered in this process.

14 I've got a bad feeling about the comments being  
15 considered because I spent three weeks last fall a year  
16 ago on the State's Citizen Advisory Committee trying to  
17 come up with your durable solution for roadless and  
18 that was paid for by the Forest Service to get the  
19 comments and testimony.

20 We wrote that Roadless Rule characteristics for  
21 Alaska, but none of that was cited that that committee  
22 did the work in the presentation. So it feels like all  
23 that work we did to come up with a durable solution you  
24 all asked for was disregarded, so that's why I'm afraid  
25 that a lot of the comments here won't be included.

1           So please get that transcript and submit it  
2 into the public comments because what we came up with  
3 in that Citizen Stakeholder Group doesn't feel like  
4 it's integrated into the preferred alternative in this  
5 process and won't result in that durable solution.

6           I'm going to speak personally from my household  
7 subsistence uses of the Tongass. We harvest a lot of  
8 deer and coho salmon and we do that in areas like  
9 Salmon Lake, Peril Strait, Ushk Bay, Poison Cove,  
10 Hoonah Sound and up around Appleton and Rodman and  
11 those are all areas that are roadless now for the most  
12 part or some of those areas are. I would request that  
13 those stay in roadless because of those uses.

14           The impacts of roading and timber harvest in  
15 those areas to young growth deplete deer populations  
16 here in Sitka on Baranof and Chichagof Islands. Those  
17 areas that are roaded and have had previous timber  
18 harvest don't hold deer. Sitkans go to the roadless  
19 areas. That's where the deer are and that's where we  
20 hunt those.

21           For those reasons I am for the specific  
22 subsistence feedback that you all are seeking, and  
23 request those areas stay as roadless across all the  
24 alternatives and that you do not lift roadless  
25 protections for those areas around Sitka.

1           Thanks.

2           (Applause)

3           MR. VANORMER: All right. Our final speaker  
4 will be Marcel LaPerriere and I believe Blake is going  
5 to speak on his behalf here.

6           MR. LAPERRIERE: My name is Blake LaPerriere,  
7 of course. I'm reading this testimony for my  
8 grandfather, Marcel LaPerriere. His name is  
9 M-A-R-C-E-L, last name L-A-P-E-R-R-I-E-R-E. I'm  
10 reading his testimony because ALS has robbed him of his  
11 ability to speak.

12           So here's what he wrote: 25 of the 38 years my  
13 wife and I have lived within the Tongass we lived on a  
14 sailboat. The boat took us to many places within the  
15 Tongass that many people aren't lucky enough to see.

16           In those 38 years I also accumulated over a  
17 year's time doing volunteer work in four Ranger  
18 Districts within the Tongass. That work took me into  
19 the heaviest logged areas in the Tongass. I can  
20 genuinely say I've driven or ridden in a U.S. Forest  
21 Service truck on most of the roads on the logged areas  
22 of the Tongass -- or on Prince of Wales Island. I've  
23 ridden or walked many more miles of roads on other  
24 islands and mainland of the Tongass.

25           Plus, as part of the volunteer work, I've flown

1 by floatplane or helicopter and even spent time on the  
2 Tongass Ranger and other U.S. Forest Service boats.  
3 I've been through endless clearcuts and hiked through  
4 miles of old-growth timber. I've been lucky enough to  
5 stand on top of or on the flanks of some of the highest  
6 mountains within the Tongass.

7 I've also explored the depths of around 100  
8 caves within the Tongass. I was even lucky enough to  
9 be part of the first cave diving team in Alaska when we  
10 dove to the back of the Alaska Room within El Capitan  
11 Cave.

12 What I'm saying is I've seen a lot more of the  
13 Tongass than a typical person who lives here. I've  
14 seen firsthand the impact of road building and timber  
15 harvesting. I've seen blowdown on edges of clearcuts.  
16 I've seen perched culverts and the damage they do. In  
17 deep snow, I've seen how the deer can't navigate  
18 through clearcuts to get to old growth. Hence, I've  
19 seen many dead deer on the edges of these clearcuts.

20 In nearly 1,000 scuba dives in the waters of  
21 the Tongass I've seen the benthic life obliterated in  
22 bays where there was a log transfer facility. I've  
23 seen firsthand the destruction of soils and streams in  
24 the karst lands. Once when I was standing in the  
25 middle of a massive clearcut on Heceta Island a U.S.

1 Forest Service oil scientist that was standing next to  
2 me said it will possibly be another 10,000 years before  
3 topsoil can regenerate on this karst.

4 I sat around the table with other members of  
5 the Forest Service as proposals are made for the  
6 distribution of funding to repair/obliterate old  
7 logging roads. Further, I've sat on the boards of two  
8 different nonprofit conservation agencies that have  
9 written many grants for stream restoration in several  
10 Ranger Districts.

11 For 15 years I worked in four different  
12 hydroelectric plants that rely on the rain that falls  
13 in the Tongass. So I know firsthand how vital these  
14 hydro plants are for our towns. I also know, as the  
15 Roadless Rule stands today, it does not impede these  
16 plans or future plans nor the transmission lines that  
17 come from them.

18 Additionally, I've built several homes in Sitka  
19 that have been partially or totally built from wood  
20 harvested on the Tongass. The wood was logged and  
21 milled by several ma and pop sawmills spread across the  
22 Tongass National Forest. In other words, as long as  
23 existing roads are used I support small-scale logging  
24 in the Tongass.

25 As you can see, my days of exploring,

1 volunteering and working are over. That doesn't mean I  
2 don't still care about the future of the Tongass. I  
3 care because I want there to be a future for my  
4 grandkids and their grandkids. I care because I want  
5 salmon and wildlife to be around for many more eons. I  
6 care because I know how important subsistence hunting  
7 and fishing are to my family and other families. I  
8 care because I know that as we humans face the massive  
9 challenges of climate change the Tongass can play a  
10 significant role in carbon sequestration.

11 Therefore, I know that the only logical action  
12 is a no action alternative. Thank you for your time.

13 (Applause)

14 MR. VANORMER: All right. Well, that concludes  
15 all the speakers that we have tonight. I guess I'm  
16 going to formally close out this hearing at -- what  
17 time do we got. For the record, it's 9:23.

18 I've now called all the persons who I indicated  
19 on the sign-in sheet that they desired to make oral  
20 comments. Is there anyone I may have inadvertently  
21 missed or omitted?

22 (No comments)

23 MR. VANORMER: Okay. Is there anyone who  
24 didn't indicate a desire to present an oral comment but  
25 wishes to do so now?

1 (No comments)

2 MR. VANORMER: Got one more.

3 MS. LAPERRIERE: My name is Connie LaPerriere.

4 C-O-N-N-I-E L-A-P-E-R-R-I-E-R-E. I have lived in  
5 Southeast Alaska for 30-some years.

6 I'm standing here as an angry person. I'm  
7 angry because I'm here testifying again about asking  
8 for the no action option on the Roadless Rule. I'm  
9 angry because I don't know how to get the message  
10 across. I'm angry that the interests of a few people  
11 are acted on rather than the views of the majority.

12 I do not travel to Prince of Wales Island much  
13 anymore, but I still care deeply about it. I love the  
14 karst and the caves. I love how limestone changes the  
15 way the forest works. I love that the salmon streams  
16 are more productive. I love the difference in how the  
17 water travels in a different way from other kinds of  
18 topography.

19 I hate how the island has been decimated from  
20 logging. I get angry when I think how I stood in a  
21 100,000 acre clearcut on karst in a watershed. I hate  
22 thinking of how poor the regeneration is on karst and  
23 how the complicated terrain is being affected. I hate  
24 what the logging has done to the creatures that use the  
25 forest.

1           I do not like to look at isolated areas  
2   supposedly left as habitat that in reality become  
3   predator havens. I hate the roads that continue to do  
4   damage. I hate the roads that are no longer counted as  
5   roads simply because they've been bar-ditched.

6           I don't like to watch a three-legged wolf run  
7   ahead of a vehicle for miles before it can find an area  
8   of old growth to get off the road. I hate crossing  
9   clearcuts that are devoid of animals and that could be  
10  used as a torture device for anyone or anything going  
11  cross-country.

12          I loved caving on Kosciusko, Heceta and other  
13  islands. I love the science and new information that's  
14  stored in these caves. I did not like driving on roads  
15  that occasionally opened up as you're driving over them  
16  because the road was built over a cave.

17          I did not like seeing the Cave Resources  
18  Protection Act treated as an obstacle rather than as a  
19  useful tool to understand a complex ecosystem that will  
20  not allow forests to regenerate in the same ways as one  
21  that is not on limestone.

22          I loved exploring caves on the other islands  
23  and finding the rich history of the peoples who have  
24  lived on these lands for time out of mind. I hate to  
25  think how close some of the discoveries about those

1 peoples came to being destroyed by road building and  
2 logging. I hate thinking that shortsighted greed will  
3 lead to those who practice subsistence living to be  
4 harmed by the impact of those roads.

5 I like thinking of the Tongass as a bearer of  
6 hope in a world of climate change. I hate thinking  
7 about its ability to sequester carbon could be  
8 adversely affected. I use wood. I'm not against  
9 logging in a thoughtful, sustainable way. I'd like to  
10 see smaller sawmills have a chance of obtaining wood  
11 for their operations. They do not need and cannot  
12 handle huge timber sales.

13 I believe we can provide a living for people  
14 who wish to have a smaller impact and a larger ability  
15 to use wood wisely without shipping it untouched to  
16 another country. This can be accomplished without new  
17 roads.

18 I would like to see us approach the Tongass as  
19 a valuable asset just as it is. We all use it to  
20 exist. We should not always and cannot continue to  
21 view the natural world as ours for the taking without  
22 regards to future generations. Sometimes no action is  
23 the best action.

24 (Applause)

25 MR. VANORMER: All right. Thank you. Any more

1 comments out there that I may have missed.

2 (No comments)

3 MR. VANORMER: All right. There being no  
4 further comments I will close this meeting. The time  
5 is 9:27. You may submit written comments after this  
6 meeting until December 17th, 2019. All the addresses  
7 and instructions for submitting comments are included  
8 in the handouts when you arrived there in the back of  
9 the room.

10 Thank you very much for participating in this  
11 process tonight. The Forest Service is looking forward  
12 to the comments on this issue from the tribes, ANCSA  
13 corporations and general public. After all comments  
14 are received and evaluated a final rule in the Alaska  
15 roadless rulemaking process will be decided by the  
16 Secretary of Agriculture by summer of 2020.

17 Thank you all for coming out tonight.

18 (Off record)

19 (END OF RECORDING)

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TRANSCRIBER'S CERTIFICATE

I, Salena A. Hile, hereby certify that the foregoing pages numbered 02 through 96 are a true, accurate, and complete transcript of ANILCA PUBLIC HEARING, SITKA, 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)