



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 26 2019

The Honorable Mazie Hirono
United States Senate
713 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Hirono:

Thank you for your letter of November 22, 2019, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking effort.

I appreciate your comments on the Roadless Rule, its application to the Tongass National Forest, and the rulemaking process. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service will enter your comment into the public record. Your comments will be taken into account as we move forward towards developing a final Rule.

I remain committed to meeting the economic, social, and natural resource needs of Alaskans and all Americans. The Forest Service is working to ensure that we continue to contribute to the resilience of forests and communities in Alaska and across the country by investing in sound forest stewardship in partnership with States, tribes, local governments and other partners.

Throughout its work on the Alaska Roadless Rule, the Forest Service will uphold its mission to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of our Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

Thank you for participating in this process and your continued interest in the management of America's National Forests. A similar response is also being sent to your colleagues.

Sincerely,

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 26 2019

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
United States Senate
437 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Leahy:

Thank you for your letter of November 22, 2019, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking effort.

I appreciate your comments on the Roadless Rule, its application to the Tongass National Forest, and the rulemaking process. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service will enter your comment into the public record. Your comments will be taken into account as we move forward towards developing a final Rule.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 26 2019

The Honorable Tina Smith
United States Senate
720 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Smith:

Thank you for your letter of November 22, 2019, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking effort.

I appreciate your comments on the Roadless Rule, its application to the Tongass National Forest, and the rulemaking process. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service will enter your comment into the public record. Your comments will be taken into account as we move forward towards developing a final Rule.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 26 2019

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen
United States Senate
110 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Van Hollen:

Thank you for your letter of November 22, 2019, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking effort.

I appreciate your comments on the Roadless Rule, its application to the Tongass National Forest, and the rulemaking process. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service will enter your comment into the public record. Your comments will be taken into account as we move forward towards developing a final Rule.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 26 2019

The Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senate
478 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Gillibrand:

Thank you for your letter of November 22, 2019, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking effort.

I appreciate your comments on the Roadless Rule, its application to the Tongass National Forest, and the rulemaking process. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service will enter your comment into the public record. Your comments will be taken into account as we move forward towards developing a final Rule.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 26 2019

The Honorable Elizabeth Warren
United States Senate
309 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Warren:

Thank you for your letter of November 22, 2019, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking effort.

I appreciate your comments on the Roadless Rule, its application to the Tongass National Forest, and the rulemaking process. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service will enter your comment into the public record. Your comments will be taken into account as we move forward towards developing a final Rule.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC. 26 2019

The Honorable Richard Durbin
United States Senate
711 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Durbin:

Thank you for your letter of November 22, 2019, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking effort.

I appreciate your comments on the Roadless Rule, its application to the Tongass National Forest, and the rulemaking process. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service will enter your comment into the public record. Your comments will be taken into account as we move forward towards developing a final Rule.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC. 26 2019

The Honorable Jeffrey Merkley
United States Senate
313 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Merkley:

Thank you for your letter of November 22, 2019, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking effort.

I appreciate your comments on the Roadless Rule, its application to the Tongass National Forest, and the rulemaking process. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service will enter your comment into the public record. Your comments will be taken into account as we move forward towards developing a final Rule.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 26 2019

The Honorable Robert Menendez
United States Senate
528 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Menendez:

Thank you for your letter of November 22, 2019, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking effort.

I appreciate your comments on the Roadless Rule, its application to the Tongass National Forest, and the rulemaking process. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service will enter your comment into the public record. Your comments will be taken into account as we move forward towards developing a final Rule.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 26 2019

The Honorable Kamala Harris
United States Senate
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Harris:

Thank you for your letter of November 22, 2019, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking effort.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

NOV 26 2019

The Honorable Patty Murray
United States Senate
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Murray:

Thank you for your letter of November 22, 2019, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking effort.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 26 2019

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
United States Senate
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Cantwell:

Thank you for your letter of November 22, 2019, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking effort.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 26 2019

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
United States Senate
731 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Stabenow:

Thank you for your letter of November 22, 2019, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking effort.

I appreciate your comments on the Roadless Rule, its application to the Tongass National Forest, and the rulemaking process. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service will enter your comment into the public record. Your comments will be taken into account as we move forward towards developing a final Rule.

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Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 26 2019

The Honorable Tom Udall
United States Senate
531 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Udall:

Thank you for your letter of November 22, 2019, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking effort.

I appreciate your comments on the Roadless Rule, its application to the Tongass National Forest, and the rulemaking process. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service will enter your comment into the public record. Your comments will be taken into account as we move forward towards developing a final Rule.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 26 2019

The Honorable Edward Markey
United States Senate
255 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Markey:

Thank you for your letter of November 22, 2019, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking effort.

I appreciate your comments on the Roadless Rule, its application to the Tongass National Forest, and the rulemaking process. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service will enter your comment into the public record. Your comments will be taken into account as we move forward towards developing a final Rule.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 26 2019

The Honorable Cory Booker
United States Senate
717 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Booker:

Thank you for your letter of November 22, 2019, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking effort.

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United States Department of Agriculture

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Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 26 2019

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Feinstein:

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Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
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DEC 26 2019

The Honorable Bernard Sanders
United States Senate
332 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Sanders:

Thank you for your letter of November 22, 2019, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking effort.

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Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 26 · 2019

The Honorable Richard Blumenthal
United States Senate
706 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Blumenthal:

Thank you for your letter of November 22, 2019, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking effort.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 22, 2019

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue,

We write to urge the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) to choose the “no action” alternative for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule (Alternative #1). Keeping these ancient federal forests undisturbed will help ensure the Tongass National Forest continues to sustain billion-dollar tourism, fishing, and recreation economies, protect irreplaceable wildlife habitat, provide sustainable jobs and revenues for people of the region, and help mitigate climate change.

Since its promulgation in 2001, the Roadless Rule has limited wasteful and environmentally damaging roadbuilding and logging, which has helped protect taxpayers and conserve high value federal forest lands for future generations. The genius of the 2001 Rule is that it preserves America’s last remaining wild forests while providing flexibility for activities like mechanized recreation, hydropower development, mining access roads, and fire prevention and public safety, all while maintaining connections between communities.

Nowhere is the importance of the Rule more apparent than in the Tongass National Forest, which accounts for more than nine million of the 58 million acres of Inventoried Roadless Area. We understand that Tongass timber sales have cost taxpayers approximately \$600 million over the last twenty years, even with the Roadless Rule in place. Continuing Roadless Rule protections in Alaska will help save taxpayers millions of dollars by limiting costly new road building in harsh and inaccessible terrain and allowing the USFS to focus on reducing its estimated \$3.2 billion maintenance backlog and maintaining its existing 371,000 miles of national forest system roads.

According to the DEIS, the Tongass is also considered one of the most important tools in fighting climate change. The forest holds about 650 million tons of carbon, which accounts for a remarkable 11 percent of the carbon currently stored in the national forests of the United States.

Alaska's Roadless areas have been home to Alaska Native groups since time immemorial and they rely upon the Tongass' lands and waters for cultural resources, subsistence lifestyles, and their livelihoods. The 2001 Rule stopped destructive logging of old-growth Tongass tracts that had damaged areas of traditional and customary use and destroyed sacred Native sites. That is why Southeast Alaska Natives have repeatedly spoken out against removing Roadless Rule protections for these areas.

We are also deeply concerned over reports that selection of the DEIS preferred alternative may have been inappropriately influenced by the White House and timber industry groups and does not reflect the recommendations of USDA scientists and career officials. We believe those professionals know that the 2001 Roadless Rule is working for Southeast Alaska. The Rule is protecting national forest land from wasteful roadbuilding and commercial logging while providing the flexibility needed for numerous development activities and a strong regional economy. Overall in Alaska, the USFS has reviewed and approved, typically within two months, dozens of projects within roadless areas including 29 mining projects, nine hydropower or intertie projects, a geothermal lease, and even an aerial tram.

We ask that you listen to scientists, economists, businesses, Alaska Natives, conservationists, recreationists, and millions of our constituents who object to the DEIS preferred alternative and request that you select the No Action alternative. Doing so will ensure the Tongass remains a nurturing home, cherished destination, and irreplaceable national treasure.

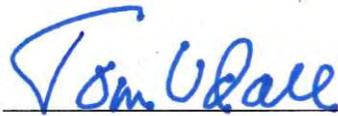
Sincerely,



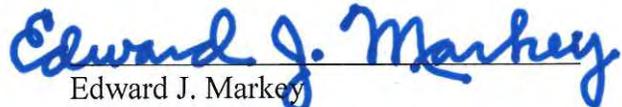
Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



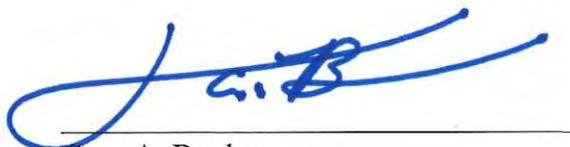
Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



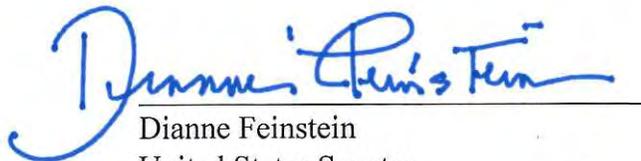
Tom Udall
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



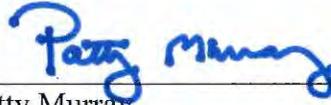
Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



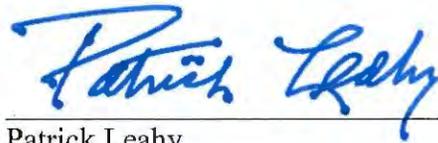
Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator



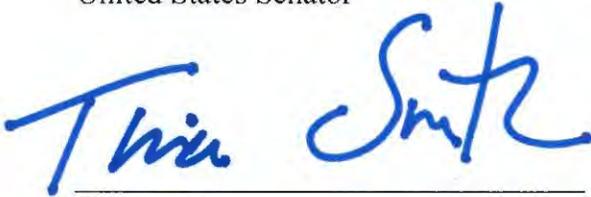
Patty Murray
United States Senator



Mazie Hirono
United States Senator



Patrick Leahy
United States Senator



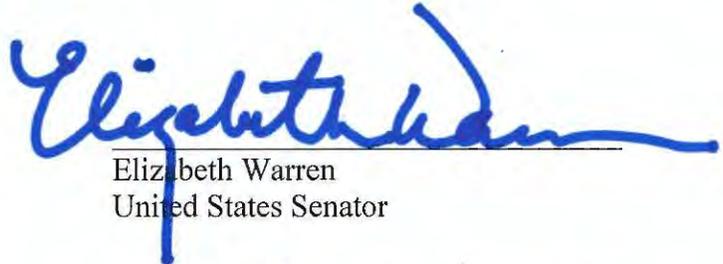
Tina Smith
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



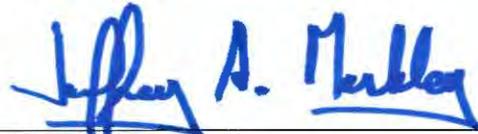
Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator