



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Alaska Region
Tongass National Forest

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File Code: 1570

Date: September 29, 2014

Buck Lindekugel
Conservation Director
Southeast Alaska Conservation Council
224 Gold Street
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Mr. Lindekugel:

This is in regards to the objection you filed on the draft Decision Notice for the Mitkof EA Project. Your objection was submitted and received electronically via e-mail to the FS-Objections-Alaska-Tongass inbox on September 22, 2014.

Forest Service regulations at 36 CFR 218.10 (a)(3) state the reviewing officer must set aside and not review an objection when “[t]he individual or entity did not submit timely and specific written comments regarding the proposed project or activity during scoping or another designated opportunity for public comment”. The Petersburg Ranger District provided two 30-day designated opportunities for public comment on the Mitkof Environmental Assessment (EA). The legal notice for the first public comment period was published on March 7, 2013; the Petersburg Ranger District did not receive any comments in response to this notice from the Southeast Alaska Conservation Council (SEACC). The legal notice for the second 30-day public comment period was published on September 5, 2013, with the comment period closing on October 7, 2013. The Forest Service received written comments from SEACC under the signature of Bob Claus on October 9, 2013, two days after the close of the comment period.

Additionally, the regulations state that if more than one party is listed on the objection, all parties must meet the requirement of having submitted specific, written comments during any of the designated opportunities for public comment (36 CFR 218.5(d)). Eric Lee was listed on your objection. While Mr. Lee did submit comments on the Mitkof project, they were also untimely as they were received on July 17, 2014, well past the October 7, 2013 deadline.

While I understand the effort that went into preparing your objection, I do not have the authority to accept an objection when the individual or entity did not submit timely specific written comments regarding the proposed project or activity during scoping or another designated opportunity for public comment (36 CFR 218.10(a)(3)). Therefore, I must set aside your objection.



I have forwarded a copy of your objection to the Petersburg District Ranger for his review outside of the objection process. In addition, my staff will provide you a courtesy copy of my response to the other objections that were filed on the Mitkof project. My response is due November 7, 2014.

Sincerely,

/s/ Forrest Cole
FORREST COLE
Forest Supervisor

cc: Jason C Anderson