



December 16, 2019

The Honorable Sonny Perdue  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20250

RE: Alaska Roadless Rulemaking #54511

Dear Secretary Perdue,

As companies that make and sell products for recreating in the outdoors, we strongly oppose recent proposals to exempt Alaska's Tongass National Forest from the Roadless Area Conservation Rule. National Forest roadless areas provide some of the finest outdoor recreation opportunities in the United States. Our National Forest roadless areas - including the 9.3 million acres in the Tongass - are where millions of people enjoy hiking, biking, camping, hunting, fishing, and other recreational activities each year. Together, we write in support of the No-Action Alternative for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule, Alternative #1, and stand united in our recommendation to retain long-standing protections for roadless areas within the Tongass National Forest.

Adopted in 2001 after one of the most extensive public involvement processes in the history of federal rulemaking, the Roadless Area Conservation Rule protects 58.5 million acres of roadless areas from harmful road building and commercial logging. More than 1.7 million people commented during this 2001 rulemaking process, of which the vast majority favored strong roadless area protection across the country. A recent public opinion poll conducted by The Pew Charitable Trusts found 75 percent of the public support the Roadless Area Conservation Rule, with rural and urban residents equally supportive. Exempting Alaska from this important national policy would set a bad precedent for reducing roadless area protections elsewhere.

The recreational values of roadless areas and all public lands managed for recreation and conservation serve as the backbone of the United State's growing outdoor recreation economy. According to a study conducted by the Outdoor Industry Association, the outdoor industry generates \$887 billion in annual consumer spending, creates 7.6 million jobs, and brings in \$59.2 billion in state and local tax revenue. Protective public land policies like the Roadless Area Conservation Rule are essential to the continued health of the industry and the communities that rely on them. The stakes are even higher for the outdoor recreation and tourism industry in Southeast Alaska.



Southeast Alaska's tourism industry depends on the scenic wildness and thriving wildlife of the Tongass National Forest. These qualities make the Tongass unique in the world and attractive to visitors from across the country and around the world. In 2017, Southeast Alaska's visitor industry directly employed 7,739 people and accounted for 17 percent of total regional employment. That says nothing of Southeast Alaska's fishing industry. The pristine forests and watersheds of the Tongass produce almost 80 percent of the commercial salmon harvested annually from Southeast Alaska. Combined, tourism and fisheries jobs, relying on the wildlife and scenery of the Tongass, comprise one quarter of all jobs in Southeast Alaska.

The Roadless Area Conservation Rule has provided effective protection both for wildlands and recreational opportunities for nearly two decades. Exempting Alaska, and its Tongass National Forest from this important national policy in favor of road building and timber harvest would irreparably damage roadless areas and the recreation, wildlife, and tourism values they embody. We strongly endorse the No-Action Alternative to support upholding the national roadless rule in Alaska.

Sincerely,

The Conservation Alliance  
Brady Robinson, Executive Director  
Bend, OR 97703

AdventureKEEN  
Molly Merkle, Chief Operating Officer  
Birmingham, AL 35233

All Good  
Lindsey Bolton, Community Director  
Morro Bay, CA 93442

Alpacka Raft  
Sarah & Thor Tingey, Co-Owners  
Mancos, CO 81328

Backpacker's Pantry  
Rodney Smith, President  
Boulder, CO 80301

Bergreen Photography  
Marc Bergreen, Owner  
Evergreen, CO 80437



CamelBak Products  
Greg Williamson, President  
Petaluma, CA 94954

Chaco Footwear  
Chip Coe, President  
Rockford, MI 49351

College Outside  
Sarah Lockwood, CEO  
Carpinteria, CA 93013

Dongah Aluminum Corporation DAC  
Paul Svrcek, Representative  
Vashon, WA 98070

Farm to Feet  
Kelly Nester, CEO  
Mount Airy, NC 27030

Fourpoints Bar Co.  
Patrick and Kevin Webber, Founders  
Denver, CO 80213

GRAYL  
Travis Merrigan, Co-Founder  
Seattle, WA 98119

Great Plains Mountain Stuff  
Leta H Kalfas, President and CEO  
Denver, CO 80238

Helinox USA, Inc.  
Ted Ganio, CEO  
Berkeley, CA 94710

Helly Hansen  
Damien Etchaubard, Marketing Director  
Sumner, WA 98390



Hipcamp  
Alyssa Ravasio, Founder & CEO  
San Francisco, CA 94103

Idaho River Adventures  
Dustin W. Aherin, Owner  
Lewiston, ID 83501

IPA Connect, LLC  
Andy Marker - Owner/President  
Hood River, OR 97031

Kahtoola  
Danny Giovale  
Flagstaff, AZ 86001

Kiitella, Inc.  
Lisa Issenberg, CEO  
Ridgway, CO 81432

Nester Hosiery  
Kelly Nester, CEO  
Mount Airy, NC 27030

New Belgium Brewing  
Steve Fechheimer, CEO  
Fort Collins, CO 80524

Northwest Rafting Company  
Zachary Collier, Owner/Outfitter  
Hood River, OR 97031

O'Keefe Consulting, LLC  
Geoff O'Keefe, President  
Boulder County, CO 80310

Oxbow Productions  
Pete McBride, Director  
Basalt, CO 81621



Patagonia  
Hans Cole, Director of Advocacy & Environmental Campaigns  
Venture, CA 93001

Peak Design  
Annie Nyborg, Sustainability Director  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Perpetual Motion NW  
David Egan, Owner  
Fall City, WA 90024

Ruffwear  
Patrick Kruse, Founder and Director of R&D  
Bend, OR 97703

Sanitas Sales Group  
Keith Reis, President  
Louisville, CO 80027

Shar  
Peter Rushford, Founder/CEO  
Austin, TX 78703

Shift Advantage  
Eric Brody, Principal  
Portland, OR 97211

Superfeet  
Linda Balfour, VP Marketing  
Ferndale, WA 98248

The Zane Ray Group, Inc.  
Reed Gregerson, President  
Whitefish, MT 59937

Toad & Co  
Gordon Seabury, CEO  
Santa Barbara, CA 93103



Uncage the Soul Productions  
John Waller, Principal  
Portland, OR 97214

Verde Brand Communications  
Kristin Carpenter, CEO  
Durango, CO 81302

Wildlands Policy Institute  
Peter Metcalf, Partner  
Park City, UT 84068