

The Honorable Sonny Perdue Secretary,
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave.,
SW Washington, DC 20250

Ms. Vicki Christiansen Chief, U.S. Forest Service
1400 Independence Ave.,
SW Washington, DC 20250

12 August 2019

**Dear Secretary Perdue and
Chief Christiansen:**

We are commercial fishermen who live and work in the Tongass National Forest. We represent various gear groups that participate in Southeast salmon fisheries, including seine, troll, and gillnet. Some of us are just breaking into the industry; some of us have carried on a family tradition over generations. All of us are invested in smart, sustainable stewardship of the resources, lands, and waters that sustain our industry and the people of Southeast Alaska. The future of our industry, our lifestyle, our ability to feed our families and the American people, all depends upon the salmon populations that are supported by the clean water and healthy, intact fish habitat of the Tongass. During the summer, all of us are on the water working the long daylight hours to support our families. For these reasons, we have two requests: first, that you delay release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Alaska Roadless Rule until October 2019 so that fishermen have the opportunity to participate in the comment period. Second, we urge you to select an alternative that broadly protects fish habitat, continues the phase-out of industrial scale old growth clear-cutting, and prioritizes the restoration of degraded watersheds and streams.

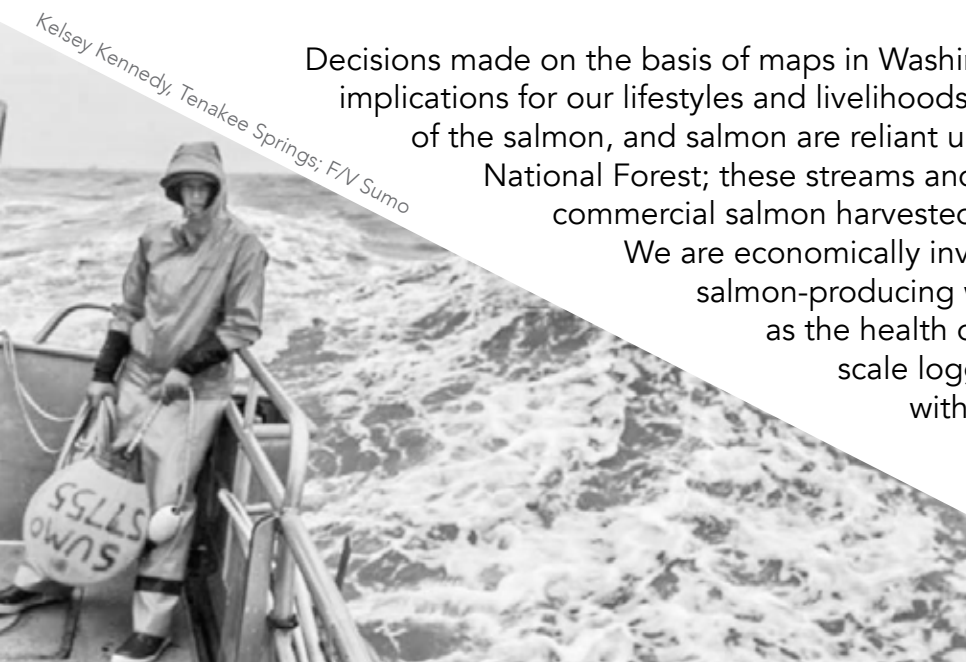
Commercial fishing is the economic backbone of Southeast Alaska. There are troll permit holders living in every single community in Southeast Alaska. 80% of all the Southeast salmon permit holders - trollers, seiners, and gillnetters - are Alaskan residents. We are small business owners that support our local communities year-round. One in ten jobs in Southeast is in the seafood industry, and we contribute 10% of all regional employment earnings. According to a McDowell report on the Economic Value of the Alaskan Seafood Industry (2013), these percentages equate to direct employment of 13,500 individuals and an estimated \$321 million in labor income in the Southeast region alone.

Decisions made on the basis of maps in Washington D.C. have palpable implications for our lifestyles and livelihoods. Our livelihoods rely on the health of the salmon, and salmon are reliant upon the health of the Tongass National Forest; these streams and rivers produce 80% of the commercial salmon harvested from Southeast Alaska each year.

We are economically invested in the protection of the top salmon-producing watersheds on the Tongass, as well as the health of the forest ecosystem. Industrial-scale logging negatively impacts fish habitat with region-wide effects, and we are concerned about the effects that a new Alaska Roadless Rule



John W. Bean, Petersburg; F/V Loon



Kelsey Kennedy, Tenakee Springs; F/V Sumo

could have on our industry and the resource we depend upon.

There are many challenges facing salmon populations that are beyond our control, such as changing ocean conditions, climate change and ocean acidification, and treaty agreements. By contrast, the fate of the Alaska Roadless Rule is well within your control. By conserving the most valuable and productive watersheds for fish production, the 2001 Roadless Rule is working for us. As you weigh your decision about the Alaska Roadless Rule, we collectively urge you to keep the Tongass Transition on track and phase out old growth logging; protect the T77 and TNC/Audubon areas and the other top salmon-producing watersheds in the forest, especially those on northern Prince of Wales Island; and urge the Forest Service to invest in stream rehabilitation and watershed restoration with the goal of improving salmon habitat and salmon production. We advocate for these management prescriptions as a start, but we maintain that they are nowhere near sufficient. The T77 proposal excludes many of the most productive salmon streams on the Tongass, especially those on Prince of Wales Island, which contains a third of Southeast's most productive salmon streams. Prince of Wales is also the island that has sustained the worst impacts from the logging industry, both historically and at present. The island and the productivity of the anadromous waters on it will continue to suffer if the 2001 Roadless Rule protections are removed. With the future of Southeast Alaska's most important resource at risk, the Forest Service must work harder to protect and restore productivity in all the anadromous waters of Southeast Alaska, from the waters located in intact habitat as well as those in previously-degraded habitat.

In closing, as much as salmon fishing is our economic livelihood, it is also our way of life. We live in the communities that we fish out of, and we are invested in the economic, social, and ecological prosperity of these communities. We need to strengthen and protect the Tongass National Forest in order for it to keep it producing salmon for local economies, our families, our communities, and the next generation of fishermen. This forest supports a way of life that is unique across the world. We depend on the forest, we are important stakeholders, and in the summer we are fully engaged in earning a living. If the comment period occurs during the summer months, we will effectively be precluded from participating. For these reasons, we urge you to: **1) delay release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement until October 2019; and, 2) select an alternative to the Alaska Roadless rule that prioritizes protecting and sustaining the Southeast salmon resource and its habitat in perpetuity.** Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

The dedicated salmon fishermen and fisherwomen of Southeast Alaska



Don + Angela Hernandez, Sitka, F/V West Rock

- *Spencer Severson ; F/V Dryas*
- *Jesse Remund + Tracy Sylvester; F/V Faithful*
- *Eric + Sarah Jordan; F/V I Gotta*
- *Ember Livingston-Emmons; F/V Quest*
- *Marty Remund + Laurie Mastrella; F/V Teasha*
- *Charlie Wilber; F/V Alexa K*
- *Woody Cyr; F/V Patience*
- *Walt Corum; F/V Seawolf*
- *Chad Winnop; F/V Myra*
- *Gavin Cambak; F/V Jetta D*
- *Jeff Martinson; F/V Tamarack*
- *David Richey; F/V Albee Rose*
- *Courtney Howard; F/V Mickey V*
- *William L Patrick; F/V Defiant*
- *Drew Terhaar; F/V Mary Carl*
- *Randall Nichols; F/V Nekton*
- *Jeff Farvor; F/V Apollo*
- *Jeff Turner; F/V Mirage*
- *Francis Mendez; F/V Ilona B*
- *Chris Peterson; F/V Ida Marie*
- *Lance Preston; F/V Duna*
- *Stan Lopata; F/V Eileen*
- *Dan Dunn + Amy Kane; F/V Eigel B*
- *Tom Van Eeckhout; F/V Drea Mor*
- *Kory Teas; F/V Invictus*
- *Olivia Wilson; F/V Seabreeze*
- *Deena + Daniel Hand; F/V Erin K*
- *Justin Bate; F/V Avalon*
- *Kelsey Kennedy; F/V Sumo*
- *Tracy Rivera; F/V Good News*
- *Uriah Strong; F/V Njord*
- *Mark Meyer; F/V Contagious*
- *Sommers Cole; F/V Energizer*
- *Joe Sebastian + Joan Kautzer; F/V Alta E*
- *Franz Sunonburg; F/V Sea Spy*
- *Arne Dahl; F/V Jubilee*
- *Dom Larson; Boston Whaler*
- *John W. Bean; F/V Loon*
- *Don + Angela Hernandez; F/V West Rock*
- *Abby Hosier; F/V Ebb and Flow*
- *John Magnuson; F/V Harmony*
- *Thomas Wood; F/V Lutele*
- *Ezra Sbonek; F/V Red Salmonberry*
- *Joseph Schwanter, Andrew Hankerd, Natalie Schwantes, Dylan Jackson, Sid Fleming*
F/V Kalliste
- *Colin Nobili + Andre Bois;; F/V Ginny*
- *Cheston Clark; F/V Lorna Dee*
- *Keiran Owens + John Welsh; F/V Shackleton*
- *Moses P Johnson; F/V Cloud Nine*
- *Cole Gregorich + Chris Nash; F/V Orion*
- *Mike Day + Jerome Abbott; F/V Nikka*
- *Matthew P Stroemer + Calvin Dahlheimer;*
F/V Acumen

• *Abigail Devries, Joel Barker, + Ben Lawrie;*
FV Mendelina

- *Vincent Mandyck; F/V Born Again*
- *Steve Fish; F/V Kariel*
- *Micah DeLong; F/V Lucky Star*
- *David Glazier; F/V Ulla*
- *Martin and Tina Johnson; F/V Poiken*
- *Tom Corso; F/V Leeward*
- *Deb Rose Gifford; F/V Luck Pt*
- *Mirabel Davis and Steve Kort; F/V Judith*
- *David Castle; F/V Eyak*
- *Brian O'Riley and Olivia Ritta; F/V Lynn*

Christine

- *Thomas "Sonny" Williams; F/V Keta*
- *Woody Pahl; F/V Melinda Rae*
- *Scott Phillips; F/V Carolyn Ann*
- *Dan Flickinger; F/V Angie Lynn*
- *Luck Dunbar; F/V Wampum*
- *Macky Cassidy; F/V Inseine*
- *Jake Bell; F/V Inseine*
- *Mike Strens; F/V Deluxer*
- *Nick Fama; F/V Molly*
- *Isaac Reynolds ; F/V April L*
- *Alec Cunningham; F/V Sea Lion*
- *Gene Gildin, F/V Trisha Marie*
- *John Lavretta, F/V Diamond Lil*

• *Oliver Christenson, F/V Silent 'C'*

- *Orion Fenner, F/V Commando*
- *Steven W. Carr, F/V Lisa Jean*
- *Roy Uber + Dee Corbell, F/V Silver Cloud*
- *Bjorn Ostenson, F/V Eyvindr*
- *Gary Hughes, F/V Coral Sea*
- *Troy Mutz, F/V Lady Jane*
- *David Callistini, F/V Spellbound*
- *Gil Knubor, F/V Jackpine*
- *Doug Jenny, F/V Windchime*
- *Lexi, Adam, Isla, Leo Hackett, F/V Myriad*



Abigail Devries + Joel Barker, Sitka, *F/V Mindalina*



Alex Cunningham, Sitka, *F/V Sea Lion*



Ben Lawrie, Sitka, *F/V Mindalina*



Cale LaDuke + Chandler O'Connell, Sitka, *F/V Saami*



Brian O Riley + Olivia Ritta, Haines,
F/V Lynn Christine



David Glazier, Sitka, *F/V Ulla*



Colin Nobili + Andre Bois, Sitka,
F/V Ginny O



Dan Flickinger, Wrangell,
F/V Angie Lynn



Cole Gregorich + Chris Nash, Sitka,
F/V Orion



John Lavretta, Sitka, *F/V Diamond Lil*



Mike Day + Jerome Abbott , Sitka,
F/V Nikka



Scott Phillips, Wrangell, *F/V Carolyn Ann*



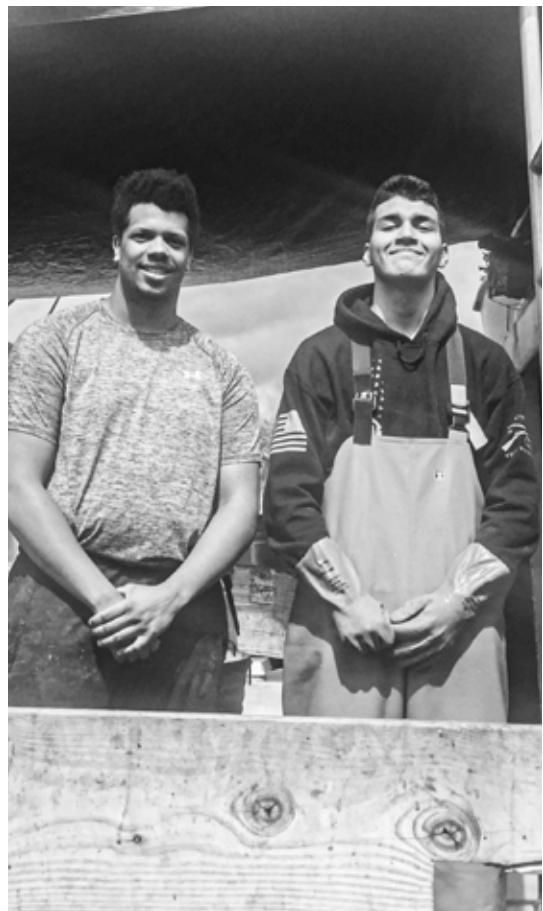
Isaac Reynolds, Sitka, *F/V April L*



Jake Bel + Macky Cassidy, Haines, *F/V Inseine*



Thomas Sonny Williams, Haines, *F/V Keta*



Keiran Owens + John Welsh, Tenakee Springs, *F/V Shackleton*



Martin + Tina Johnson , Sitka, *F/V Poiken*



Joseph Schwanter, Andrew Hankerd-
Natalie Schwantes, Dylan Jackson, Sid
Fleming, Sitka, *F/V Kalliste*



Moses P Johnson , Sitka, *F/V Cloud Nine*



Woody Pahl, Haines, *F/V Melinda Rae*



Troy Mutz, Sitka, *F/V Lady Jane*



Cheston Clark, Sitka, *F/V Lorna Dee*



Luck Dunbar, Haines, *F/V Wampum*



Gene Gildin, Haines, *F/V Trisha Marie*



Tom Corso, Port Alexander, *F/V Leeward*



Matthew P Stroemer + Calvin Dahlheimer, Sitka, *F/V Acumen*



Oliver Christenson, Petersburg, *F/V Silent 'C'*



Orion Fenner, Petersburg, *F/V Commando*



Steven W. Carr, Sitka, *F/V Lisa Jean*



Roy Uber + Dee Corbell, Sitka, *F/V Silver Cloud*



Bjorn Ostenson, Auke Bay, *F/V Eyvindr*



Gary Hughes, Sitka, *F/V Coral Sea*



Gil Knubor, Sitka, *F/V Jackpine*



David Callistini, Sitka, *F/V Spellbound*



Doug Kenny, Sitka, *F/V Windchime*



Lexi, Adam, Isla, Leo Hackett,
F/V Myriad



William L Patrick Sitka, *F/V Defiant*



John W. Bean, Petersburg, *F/V Loon*



Woody Cyr, Sitka, *F/V Patience*



Jesse Remund + Tracy Sylvester, Sitka,
F/V Faithful



Drew Terhaar, Sitka, *F/V Mary Carl*



Lance Preston, Sitka, *F/V Duna*



Abby Hosier, Sitka, *F/V Ebb and Flow*



Tom Van Eeckhart, Tenakee Springs,
F/V Drea Mor



Don Angela Hernandez, Sitka, *F/V West Rock*



Spencer Severson, Sitka, *F/V Dryas*



Jeff Martinson, Sitka, *F/V Tamarack*



Kory Teas, Tenakee Springs, *F/V Invictus*



Eric + Rose Jordan, Sitka, *F/V I Gotta*



Kelsey Kennedy, Tenakee Springs, *F/V Sumo*



Ezra Sbonek, Sitka, *F/V Red Salmonberry*



Mark Meyer, Tenakee Springs, *F/V Contagious*



Arne Dahl , Petersburg, *F/V Jubilee*



Tracy Rivera Tenakee Springs,
F/V Good News



David Richey, Sitka, *F/V Albee Rose*



Courtney Howard, Sitka, *F/V Mickey V*



Chad Winnop, Sitka, *F/V Myra*



Charlie Wilber, Sitka, *F/V Alexa K*



Dan Dunn, Sitka, *F/V Eigel B*



John Magnuson, Sitka, *F/V Harmony*



Gavin Campbak, Sitka, *F/V Jetta D*



Walt + Sage Coram, Sitka, *F/V Seawolf*



Jeff Farvor, Sitka, *F/V Apollo*



Deena Hand, Tenakee Springs,
F/V Erin K