



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

July 13, 2007

*Ensure that your Tax Dollars are Spent Wisely*

**COSPONSOR**

**THE NATIONAL FOREST ROADLESS AREA CONSERVATION ACT**  
**to Prevent Wasteful Forest Service Spending on Logging Roads**

Dear Colleague:

Recently, you helped put a stop to harmful and wasteful government spending on subsidies for the commodity development of logging roads to gain access to the Tongass National Forest during consideration of the Fiscal Year 2008 Interior and Environment Appropriations Bill (Roll Call 579). While this victory was momentous, this does not guarantee that the rest of America's vast and wild landscapes will remain free from similar industry and government intrusion. Please join us in cosponsoring the **National Forest Roadless Area Conservation Act, H.R. 2516** to ensure that some of our last pristine national forests remain free from logging, mining and drilling interests.

Currently, the Tongass National Forest in Alaska is the only forest not managed under the protections of the 2001 Roadless Rule. With more than 9.3 million acres of roadless areas, the Tongass contains one out of every six acres protected by H.R. 2516. It serves as a classic example of how roadless area logging has proven inefficient and has failed to produce profits and job growth to make up for losses from the recreational industry and from increased damage to valuable watersheds. Since 1982, the Forest Service has lost nearly one billion dollars logging and building timber roads in the Tongass, an average loss of \$40 million annually. Also, since 1996, timber related employment has been down from 1,560 to fewer than 200 jobs. This makes the subsidy over \$200,000 per timber job. In contrast, the old growth trees, endangered wildlife and clean rivers of this pristine area are a draw to a thriving recreation economy. The Outdoor Industry Association estimates that outdoor recreation in the Tongass contributes \$2.5 billion to Alaska's economy and supports 28,000 jobs in the state.

Nationally, as of the year 2000, recreation, hunting and fishing in National Forests has contributed 38 times more income and created 31 times more jobs than logging. But the Forest Service privileges logging subsidies at the expense of important road maintenance and

community fire protection measures. Currently, there is a \$10 billion backlog across the country in needed road maintenance. H.R. 2516 would protect these pristine areas from most logging and road construction while allowing for existing road maintenance and construction in order to fight fires, maintain forest health and ensure public safety.

Last month, Congress made it clear that upholding expensive government subsidies for logging projects that ignore the realities of a high-cost global economy, like those in the Tongass National Forest, is not an efficient use of taxpayer dollars. What is more, the 4.2 million citizens that publicly registered their comments believe that it is absolutely vital that we conserve our roadless ecosystems to ensure that vital wildlife habitat, scenery and recreational opportunities in our National Forests are enjoyed for generations to come. It is time for America to take responsibility for the growing federal deficit and prevent the Forest Service's fiscal mismanagement of our inventoried roadless areas.

To become a cosponsor of this bill, or for more information, please contact Tracy Nagelbush in Rep. Inslee's office at x56311 or Andria Hoffman in Rep Kirk's office at x54835.


Sincerely,




JAY INSLEE  
Member of Congress




MARK KIRK  
Member of Congress



MAURICE HINCHEY  
Member of Congress



CHRISTOPHER SHAYS  
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GEORGE MILLER  
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