



*Your Land.  
Your Voice.*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **U.S. House Votes to Limit Tongass Road Subsidies Taxpayers and America's Rainforest in Alaska Protected**

WASHINGTON, DC— In a strong show of bipartisanship, last night the House of Representatives voted to prohibit the use of taxpayer dollars for logging roads in the Tongass National Forest. The amendment to the FY2008 Interior Appropriations bill, sponsored by Reps. Robert Andrews (D-NJ) and Steve Chabot (R-OH), won by a huge margin of 283 to 145. The amendment was supported by a broad coalition of taxpayer and budget watchdog groups, sportsmen and conservationists.

“This is a terrific victory for America’s Rainforest and America’s taxpayers,” said Laurie Cooper, Rainforest Program Director of Alaska Wilderness League. “The Tongass is home to one of the government's most ridiculous subsidies – tens of millions of dollars are wasted each year on roads that go nowhere except to clearcut the world’s largest remaining coastal temperate rainforest.”

The cost to the American taxpayer for logging in the Tongass National Forest has topped \$1 billion since 1982. According to an independent analysis of Forest Service records, the Tongass timber program has operated at an average loss of \$40 million each year.

“The leadership provided by Reps. Andrews and Chabot was invaluable,” said Cindy Shogan, Executive Director of the Alaska Wilderness League. “Americans and Tongass wildlife owe them a great thanks.”

This victory follows the close of a public comment period on a revision of Tongass Land Management Plan (TLMP). The agency received over 100,000 comments in opposition to the “proposed action” in the draft plan which would leave most of the roadless areas which contain old-growth forest open to clearcutting. It also contains projects building more than 4,300 miles of new logging roads. According to Forest Service estimates, Tongass logging roads cost between \$160,000 and \$500,000 per mile to construct.

The Tongass National Forest is this country’s largest national forest and the world’s last intact temperate rainforest. Centuries-old trees provide critical habitat for wolves, grizzly bears, wild salmon, bald eagles and other wildlife that have disappeared from many other parts of the country.



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During the last 45 years, the Alaska timber industry has logged over 1 million acres of Southeast Alaska's old-growth forest.

**About Alaska Wilderness League – Your Land. Your Voice.**

Alaska Wilderness League's mission is to lead the effort to preserve Alaska's wilderness by engaging citizens, sharing resources, collaborating with other organizations, educating the public, and providing a courageous, constant and victorious voice for Alaska in the nation's capital. It is the only organization dedicated solely to the preservation of Alaska's wilderness in the nation's capital.

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