



*Your Land.
Your Voice.*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 16, 2011

Contact: Gwen Dobbs
202-266-0418 or gwen@alaskawild.org

**Statement by Steven Kline, Senior Government Affairs Representative,
Alaska Wilderness League**

Roadless Rule First Step to Appropriate Conservation for the Tongass National Forest

“On March 4, 2011, a federal judge in Alaska reinstated important roadless rule protections for the Tongass National Forest. Since December 2003, the Tongass had been singled-out for exemption from the national roadless rule, which protects unroaded parcels of 5,000 acres in National Forests from commercial logging and road construction. The judge in this case ruled that such an exemption for the Tongass was ‘arbitrary and capricious.’

The roadless rule is one layer of protection for America’s rainforest in Alaska – that may change under future administrations. The League also supports passing legislative protections for special areas within the Tongass. A place as unique as the Tongass necessitates an approach to forest management, conservation, and restoration that ensures that high-value lands and watersheds are granted the strongest levels of protection possible. We support a science-based management plan which takes a watershed by watershed approach to determine how to meet the needs of the communities of southeast Alaska and the forest itself. The League will continue its work with our partners nationwide and in southeast Alaska to craft a locally-supported, comprehensive solution for the Tongass National Forest that realizes the inherent economic value of conservation and protects key resources such as commercial fishing, recreation, tourism and traditional uses.

With over 5,500 salmon-filled streams and tributaries and all five species of Pacific salmon – the Tongass is truly a “salmon forest,” and deserves a plan that ensures that the watersheds, high-value forest, salmon habitat, and forest-dependent livelihoods of southeast Alaskans are prioritized for conservation.”

###



www.AlaskaWild.org

122 C St NW, Ste 240, Washington, DC 20001 * Tel: 202-544-5205 * Fax: 202-544-5197