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Rep. Don Young Churns out More Controversial Legislation for America's Rainforest

Single-stakeholder Legislation to Divide Communities, Privatize Public Lands

Statement by Cindy Shogan, Executive Director, Alaska Wilderness League:

“Representative Don Young (R-AK) has continued his history of introducing controversial legislation for the Tongass National Forest, America's Rainforest, in southeast Alaska. His latest bad bill, H.R. 1306, the ‘Unrecognized Southeast Alaska Native Communities Recognition and Compensation Act of 2011,’ privatizes valuable public lands, where all southeast Alaskans hunt, fish, and recreate and hands ownership over to a single-stakeholder.

The bill amends the 1971 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, creates five new ‘Urban Corporations’ in southeast Alaska, and transfers a significant chunk of public lands – **a combined total of 115,200 acres within the Tongass National Forest – to private ownership, including surplus Federal property, subsistence and aquaculture sites, and eco-tourism sites.** The Tongass is otherwise known as the ‘crown jewel’ of the US Forest System. It is a rare place which brims with over 5,500 salmon filled streams and rivers, where southeast Alaskans live off the lands and waters, where the highest densities of eagles and bears thrive, and that contains our greatest concentration of old-growth trees.

Bite by bite, Rep. Young is eating away at America's Rainforest. He has [announced](#) that he will reintroduce the highly controversial Sealaska bill shortly. We must make balanced decisions for the Tongass today and provide the strongest possible protections possible for high-value areas within the Tongass – where Alaskans hunt, fish and recreate, where magnificent great old stands of old-growth still exist in America, and where Alaskans still live a traditional way of life.”

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