



*Your Land.
Your Voice.*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 15, 2016

Contact: Corey Himrod

Tel: 202-544-5205 or Email: corey@alaskawild.org

House Committee passes bill to privatize areas in the Tongass; delay transition away from old-growth

WASHINGTON – Today, the House Natural Resources Committee passed H.R. 3650 – the State National Forest Management Act – out of committee on a 23-15 vote. This legislation would authorize states to acquire up to two million acres of federal National Forest land and operate it expressly for timber or other extractive development at the expense of all other uses. Under the federal multiple use mandate, National Forests are managed to provide economic development as well as clean drinking water and air, fish and wildlife habitat, and opportunities for hunting, fishing and camping. Instead of maintaining this balance for future generations, lands transferred under H.R. 3650 would be managed for logging exclusively, throwing other uses into jeopardy.

In addition to the original bill's language, Rep. Don Young (R-AK) added an amendment to H.R. 3650 which would further delay management decisions in the Tongass National Forest in southeast Alaska by prohibiting the U.S. Forest Service from issuing a Record of Decision on the Tongass Land Management Plan amendment to transition out of old growth logging until it completes a comprehensive inventory on second growth stands. Allowing for such a delay would undermine the Forest Service's proposed plan to move management on the Tongass away from harmful old-growth logging toward one that supports and promotes a diverse and sustainable economy.

The advancement of H.R. 3650 comes after multiple Senate bills were introduced two weeks ago, which seek to privatize areas of the Tongass National Forest.

Statement by Kristen Miller, Conservation Director at Alaska Wilderness League:

"This legislation is yet another attempt to prop up the flagging timber industry in Southeast Alaska and to delay the transition away from old-growth logging at the expense of sustainable industries in the Tongass National Forest, and the abundant wild salmon, scenery and wildlife that are the backbone of the region's economy.

Transferring these lands out of public management would have far reaching impacts on the region's ecosystems and economy. The beauty and wildlife of the Tongass supports thousands of jobs in Southeast Alaska's tourism, recreation and fishing industries. These sustainable industries generate \$2 billion annually. If passed, H.R. 3650 would put Southeast Alaska's remaining pristine old-growth forest, its wildlife, and its sustainable economy at risk.



www.AlaskaWild.org

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

Southeast Alaska's economy has already transitioned away from logging, and the Forest Service is taking proactive steps to protect the sustainable industries that will provide for people in the decades to come. This bill puts public interest second and champions a narrow set of special interests, instead of doing what's best for Southeast Alaskans."

#



www.AlaskaWild.org

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