

# Tongass National Forest Roadless Areas

## Castle Roadless Area on Kupreanof Island



Photo: John Schoen

This roadless area is located on Kupreanof Island in the Tongass National Forest of Southeast Alaska. The Tongass has many Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs). These protected areas have high biological value, meaning they provides important habitat to one or more species, like the Queen Charlotte Goshawk.









Audubon | ALASKA



# Castle Roadless Area



## Key to Symbols

- |   |  |
|---|--|
|  Core Areas of Biological Value        |  Roads          |
|  Large Roadless Areas (2003 Inventory) |  Past Clearcuts |
|  Salmon streams                        |  |
|  Other streams                         |  |







### *Local Resident Spotlight*

Queen Charlotte Goshawk

The **Castle River Roadless Area** on Kupreanof Island is bounded by broad flat tidal estuaries along the coast. Further inland, on the higher and steeper slopes are forests of hemlock, Alaska yellow cedar, and Sitka spruce. The Northern Goshawk, a forest bird of prey, nests among these large old trees. The goshawk found in the Castle River roadless area (and in Southeast Alaska generally) is the Queen Charlotte Goshawk, a subspecies found only in Alaska and British Columbia. The Queen Charlotte Goshawk is smaller and has darker plumage than do goshawks in other parts of the continent. Goshawks prefer to nest on large limbs of old-growth trees and hunt for small mammals and birds in the surrounding forests. As young goshawks start learning to fly, they become “branchers” as they test their wings and hop around on the branches and tree trunks of their old-growth home. Living nearby these goshawk families are other birds of prey including Bald Eagles, Red-tailed Hawks, Sharp-shinned Hawks, and other forest birds like Spruce Grouse and Red-breasted Sapsuckers.

Photo: John Schoen

## Facts on the Tongass National Forest

- There are **16.7 million** acres of Tongass National Forest lands in Southeast Alaska.
- There are **9.3 million** acres of roadless areas in the Tongass National Forest.
- **168** breeding bird species, **82** land mammal species & **5** salmon species use the forests and habitats of Southeast Alaska.
- Industries reliant on fish and wildlife populations and healthy forest ecosystems employ **over 30 times more people** in Southeast Alaska than the timber industry.
- **1.5 million** people visit Southeast Alaska annually with **~600,000** participating in wildlife viewing and bird watching.
- **109** named roadless areas in the Tongass National Forest (2001).
- Up to **12%** of the country’s stored carbon found within national forests is captured in the Tongass.
- It costs about **\$160,000–\$500,000** per mile to construct new roads on the Tongass.
- There is a **\$68 million** maintenance backlog for existing Tongass logging roads.
- **5,000 miles** of logging roads already exist on the Tongass.

## The importance of the Roadless Rule

The 2001 Roadless Rule protects wild places in our National Forests across the country. Roadless areas on the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska have exceptional wilderness value and areas of high biological value. About half of the big old trees on the Tongass have already been felled for logging, but the Roadless Rule helps protect about half of what is left. Roadless areas are home to salmon, spruce grouse, goshawks, bears, wolves, and many other birds and wildlife. Roadless areas provide humans with opportunities for fishing, hunting, bird-watching, backpacking, and wilderness solitude.

The Roadless Rule operates on the Tongass to protect this roadless area and others from roadbuilding and logging. But efforts to chip away at these protections are underway, and the Tongass roadless areas are threatened by a rollback that specifically targets the big old trees that wildlife call home. Join us in advocating for protecting the Queen Charlotte Goshawk's home and use this map and factsheet to write specific comments when the time comes. Stay tuned for an action alert in your inbox, or find out how to sign up at [ak.audubon.org/take-action](http://ak.audubon.org/take-action).

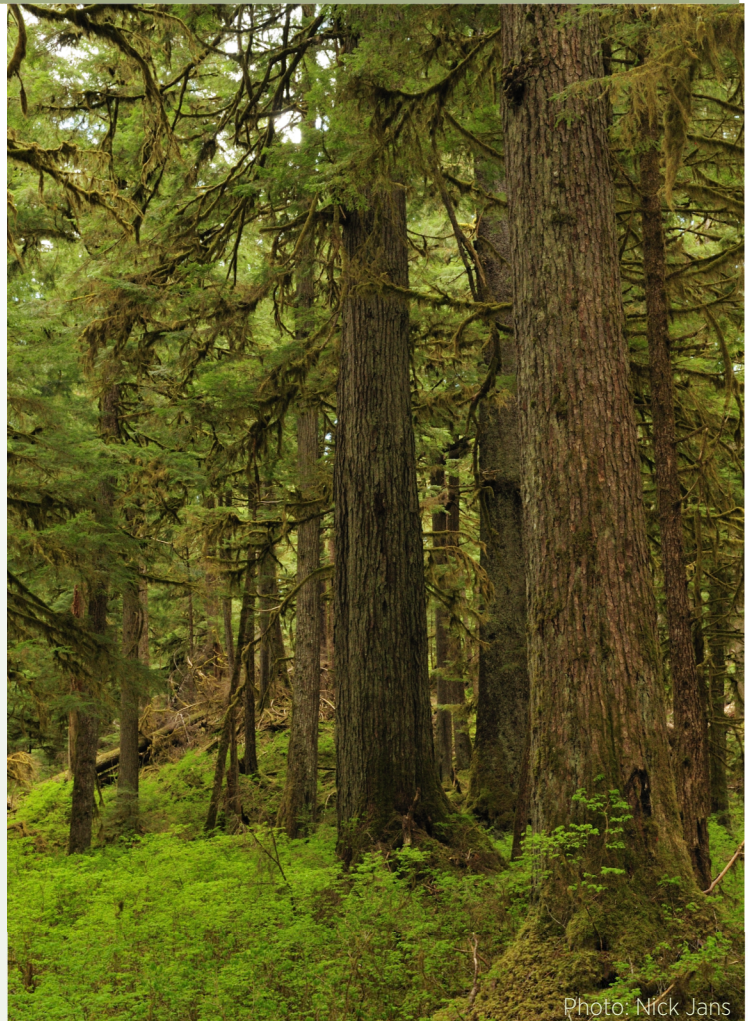
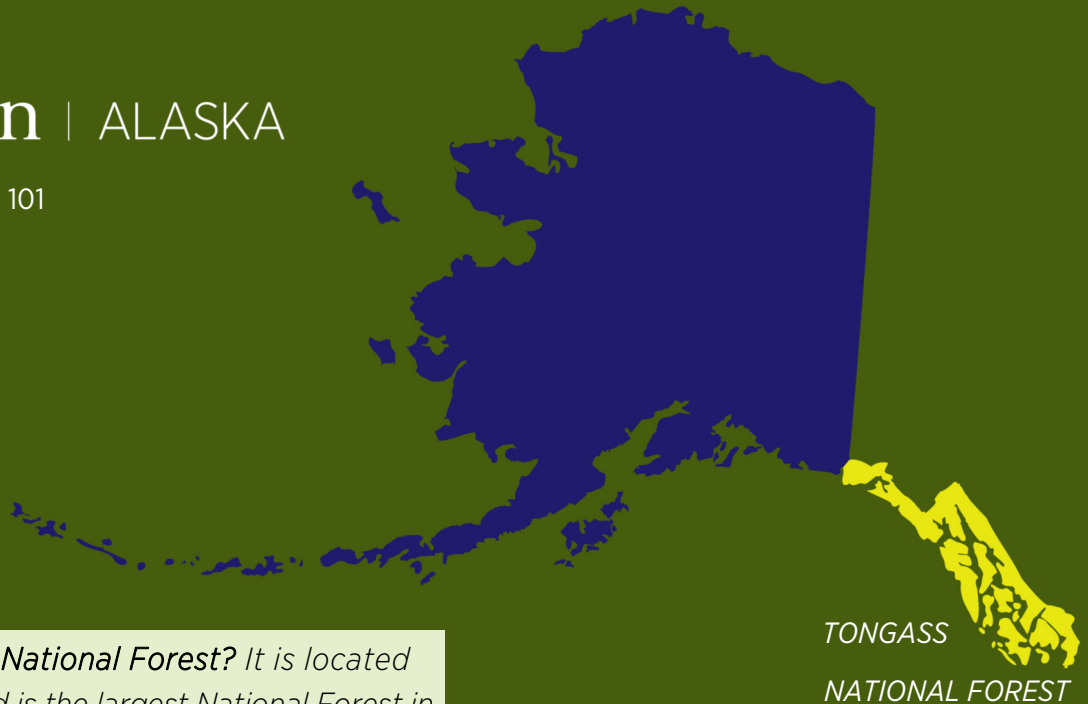


Photo: Nick Jans



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TONGASS  
NATIONAL FOREST

*Where is the Tongass National Forest? It is located in Southeast Alaska and is the largest National Forest in the United States. It is also the last remaining old-growth temperate rainforest in the world.*