

# Tongass National Forest Roadless Areas

## Hoonah Sound Roadless Area on Chichagof Island



Photo: John Schoen







This roadless area is located on Chichagof 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 provide important habitat to one or more species and serve as a buffer against climate change.

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# Hoonah Sound Roadless Area



## Key to Symbols

-  Roads
-  Past Clearcuts
-  Salmon streams
-  Other streams
-  Core Areas of Biological Value
-  Large Inventoried Roadless Areas

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 Miles





### *Ecological Spotlight*

#### Climate Resiliency

The **Hoonah Sound Roadless Area** on Chichagof Island is a climate stronghold, as are other roadless areas in the Tongass National Forest. The **Hoonah Sound Roadless Area** stretches from glacier-capped peaks to old-growth forest and ocean estuaries. These intact glacier-to-sea corridors are climate corridors, where cold air cooling and cold water pulses from glacial runoff provide key habitat for tidewater glacier-dependent species like the Kittlitz's Murrelet. The forests that grow after glaciers recede sequester carbon to mitigate the impacts of climate change. This roadless area also acts as a climate refuge for plants and wildlife that are already experiencing the effects of a changing climate. The big trees help shade salmon streams, keeping them cool in a warming world. Protecting old-growth forests means protecting the glaciers that feed the water going into these forests. It also means making connections across these rich environments to our own actions. The Roadless Rule and effective climate change policy can protect places like this as climate strongholds for our future.

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 important forests of the Tongass and use this map and factsheet to write specific comments when the time comes. Stay tuned for an action alert in your inbox, or go to [ak.audubon.org/take-action](http://ak.audubon.org/take-action) to find out how to sign up.

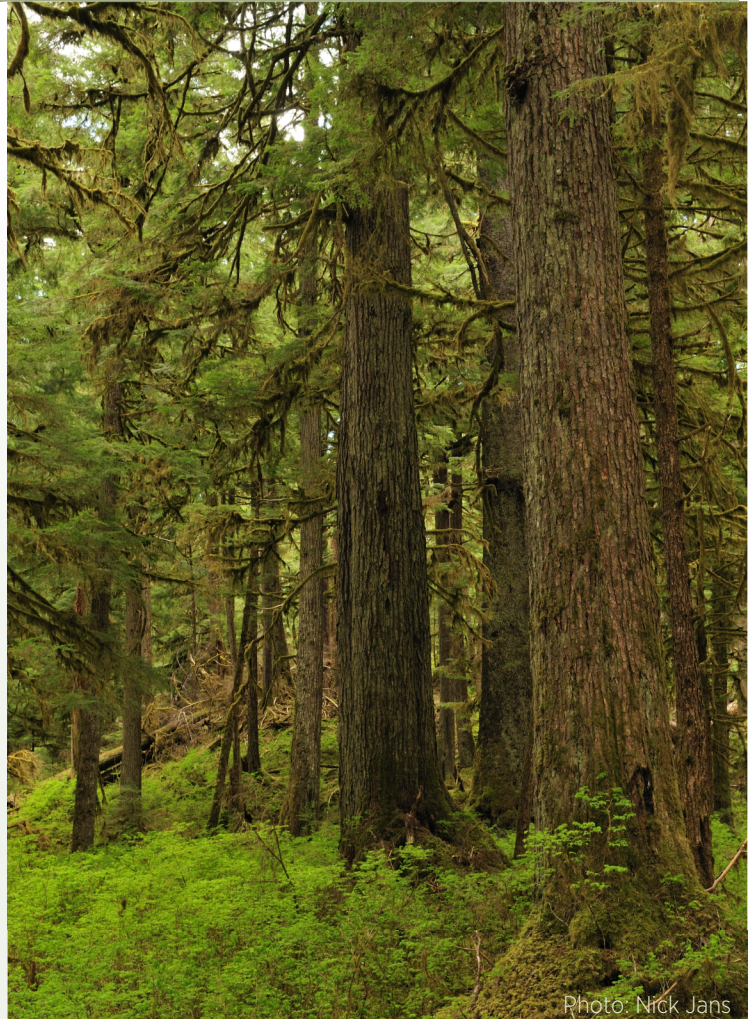
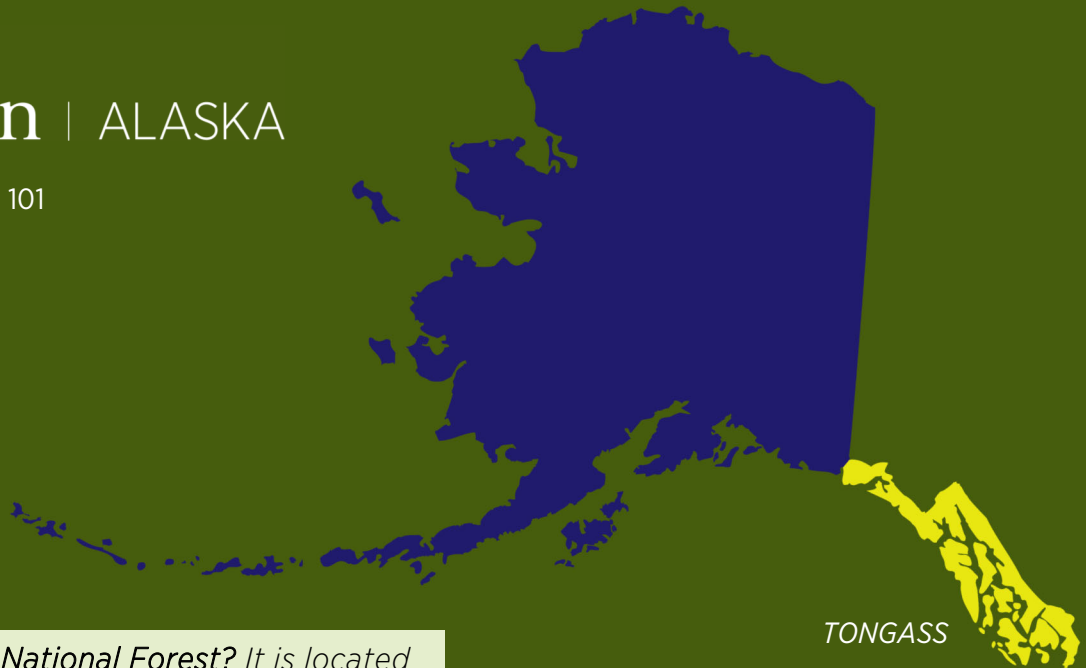


Photo: Nick Jans



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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.*