

Tongass National Forest Roadless Areas

Karta Roadless Area on Prince of Wales Island



Photo: John Schoen

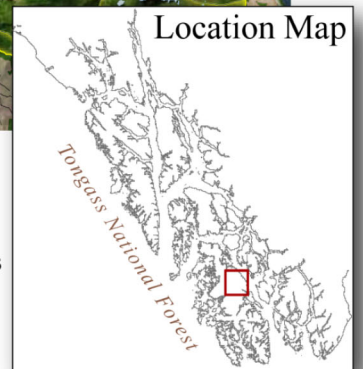
This roadless area is located on Prince of Wales Island in the Tongass National Forest of Southeast Alaska. The Tongass has many Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs). These protected areas have high biological value, meaning they provide important habitat to one or more species and maintain habitat connectivity for wildlife.

Karta Roadless Area



Key to Symbols

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





Ecological Spotlight

Habitat Connectivity and Crossroads

The **Karta Roadless Area** is found in the heart of Prince of Wales Island, and lies close to several other roadless areas as well as the Karta River Wilderness. This proximity to other nearby protected areas helps maintain a large, interconnected corridor for animals on Prince of Wales Island, which has been identified as a “hotspot” of biological diversity for southeast Alaska. Large populations of Sitka black-tailed deer, black bears, wolves, and other mammals are found in the **Karta Roadless Area**. Bald Eagles, Marbled Murrelets, Queen Charlotte Goshawks, Peregrine Falcons, and Osprey are all found in this area as well, all drawn to the big trees and healthy forests. Fish-bearing streams provide habitat for runs of coho, pink, chum, and sockeye salmon, as well as steelhead and cutthroat trout. The **Karta Roadless Area** and other roadless areas nearby collectively support these robust populations of fish, birds, and mammals. Because these individual places are protected, and because healthy connectivity exists between them, forest animals are able to thrive.

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 important habitat and connectivity 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 to find out how to sign up.

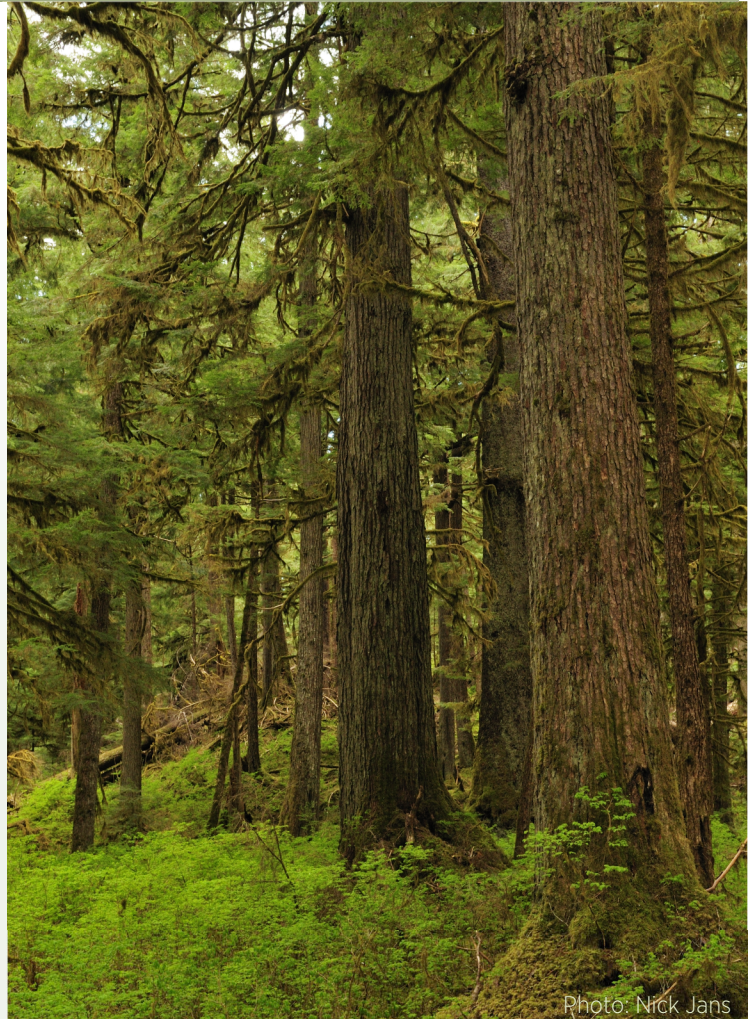
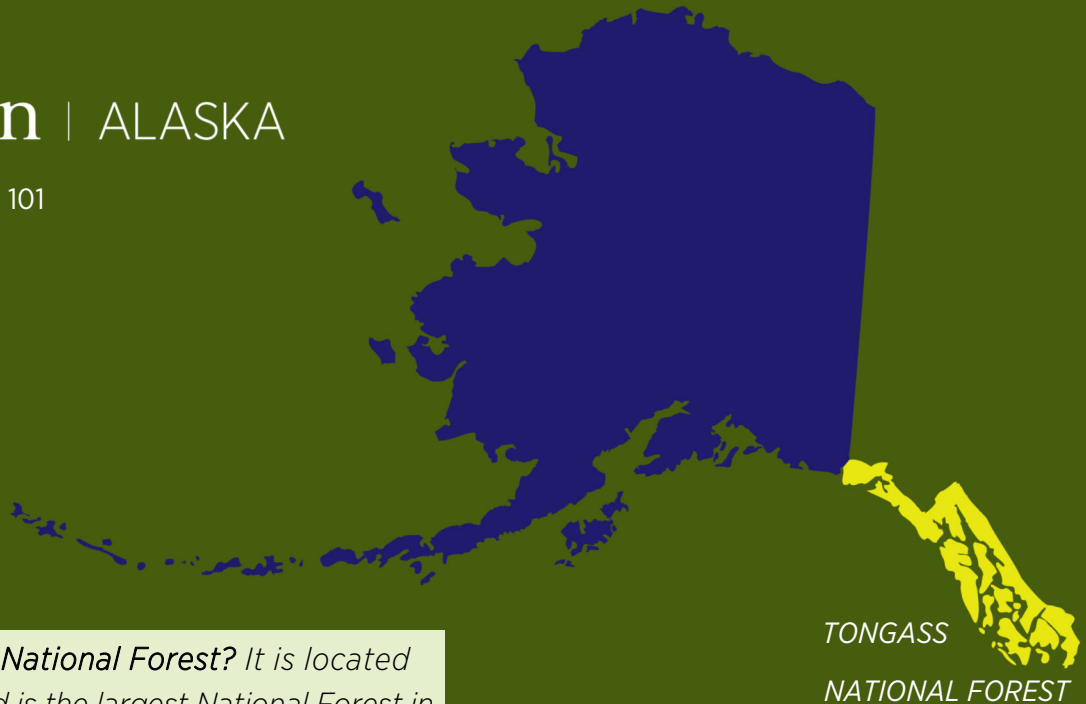


Photo: Nick Jans



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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.