



Organized Village of Kake

PO Box 316  
Kake, Alaska 99830  
Telephone: 907.785.6471  
Fax: 907.785.4902



ORGANIZED VILLAGE OF SAXMAN  
Rt. 2, Box 2, Saxman, Alaska 99901  
Phone: 907-247-2502

February 5, 2019

Sonny Perdue, Secretary of Agriculture  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Honorable Secretary Perdue:

On behalf of the Organized Village of Kake and the Organized Village of Saxman, we request an official government to government consultation with you regarding the proposed Alaska-specific roadless rule. As federally recognized Indian Tribes organized under the Indian Reorganization Acts of 1934 and 1936, our citizens share a deep connection with the incredible waters, lands, and resources of Southeast Alaska; a connection forged by our ancestors over the past 10,000 years --- since time immemorial.


On August 30, 2018, you announced the U.S. Department of Agriculture's intent to initiate an environmental impact statement (EIS) and public rulemaking process to address an Alaska-specific roadless rule for management of inventoried roadless areas on the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska. Before that announcement, neither your office, the Forest Service, nor State of Alaska attempted to consult or collaborate with our Tribes.


Alaska Governor Walker convened a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) last fall to advise the State of Alaska on this important topic; however, only one Alaska Native was appointed to represent the interests of all seventeen federally recognized Indian Tribes from Southeast Alaska. This was a gigantic and unrealistic burden for one individual. The other Alaska Native appointed to the CAC represented Sealaska Corporation, the for-profit Alaska Native Regional Corporation established under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act and state law for Southeast Alaska --is not an Indian Tribe.

While the Forest Service has included some Southeast Alaska Indian Tribes as "cooperating agencies" during preparation of this EIS, the frantic pace necessary to satisfy some preordained timeline imposes substantial burdens on those Tribes hoping to be at the table when decisions are made on an Alaska-specific roadless rule. Given the harms and delays caused by President Trump's shutdown, we are further concerned that careful and informed consultation between our Tribes, your office, and the Forest Service may become little more than an afterthought.

Consequently, as elected leaders of our Tribes, we respectfully request to consult with you directly about the Alaska-specific roadless rule this spring. Since the decision to proceed with this rulemaking, and the ultimate decision, is yours, we believe speaking directly with you is the most effective way of assuring you hear what we need to say. It takes effort, resources, and coordination to travel all the way to Washington D.C., but we hope our willingness indicates how important this issue is to our Tribe's citizens. Please let us know, as soon as possible, when we could meet directly with you. Thank you.

Respectfully,

  
Joel Jackson, President  
Organized Village of Kake  
P.O. Box 316  
Kake, Alaska 99830  
Ph: 907-785-6471

  
Lee Wallace, President  
Organized Village of Saxman  
Rt. 2, Box 2 (Saxman)  
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901  
Ph: 907-247-2502