

Dear Secretary Rollins,

The Trump administration should abandon its reckless and unpopular proposal to rescind the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule. Roadless Areas are biological strongholds for threatened and endangered species and provide clean drinking water for millions of people in hundreds of cities and towns across the nation. Roadless Areas also provide outstanding opportunities for recreation.

Opening Roadless Areas to road construction, logging, mining, and oil and gas drilling will have significant adverse impacts to wildlife, clean drinking water, recreation, and natural and cultural resources. As road densities increase, wildlife habitat is dissected into smaller and smaller fragments. More roads inevitably lead to increased mortality for wildlife from vehicle collisions and poaching. Roads also increase erosion and sedimentation into streams, decreasing habitat quality for aquatic species and increasing costs for treating drinking water.

Contrary to your department's claim, repealing the Roadless Rule will actually increase the number of wildfires. The Draft EIS admits that human-caused fires (which constitute the majority of fires) "increase in abundance with proximity to roads" and that wildfires are four times more likely to start in areas with roads versus Roadless Areas. Building more roads in Roadless Areas is likely to increase the number of fires, not decrease them.

The Forest Service should abandon this brazen attempt to hand over Roadless Areas to the timber, mining, and oil & gas industries.

Sincerely,

[First Name] [Last Name]