



After a half century of colonial plantation forestry, requiring hundreds of millions of dollars of taxpayer subsidies funding documented maladministration of the Tongass, the USFS has an explicit mission this evening — to force the expansion of the boundaries of its plantation with the elimination of the Roadless Rule.

Taxpayer subsidized colonial plantation economics have never worked out well for anyone but a few wealthy owners and what little trickles down to the workers. One problem is that most of the workers who have been benefiting, live in China, not Southeast Alaska.

Regardless of an overwhelming public outcry, the USFS has orders from above to force upon the residents of Southeast Alaska, the permanent elimination of the Roadless Rule.

It is no coincidence nor any wonder both the Trump and Dunleavy authoritarian styles face constitutional challenges of moral and democratic legitimacy.

Their economic policies have failed us culturally, and socially and brought us to the cliff edge of state failure.

A failed state is one which cannot carry out its most basic functions.

Among those functions is the upholding of the social contract, the fabric of which is our social safety net and which is expected of any civil society.

Economic policies have deliberately nullified our contract and eviscerated the funding of our public broadcasting system, our ferry system, our education system, our health systems and others.

These actions now threaten our personal and collective economic and social security.

If there exists one fundamental social safety net it is surely the biological integrity and environmental quality of life that supports the backbone and backdrop of our regional economy.

It provides the social security of our seafood industry and our environmental quality of life which attracts international visitors, and perhaps most crucially, the wildlands of the Tongass provide the highest quality of food of last resort.

The forced elimination of the Roadless Rule on the Tongass will maintain our course over the cliff of state failure and set in motion our own real life Hunger Games.

Those policies have already set in motion a terrible climate math that threatens all present and future generations.

There is no justice in such outcomes just as there is no moral basis for the laws of physics. Once violated, those laws are strictly enforced. But there's more here: at a certain point they become self reinforcing, and irreversible.

The Roadless Rule and all the remnant wild watersheds it protects are all we have left on the islands of the Tongass National Forest.

Tonight's Open House provides an opportunity for defending our rights to subsistence resources. It may be our last chance to protect what remains of our social safety net.

