



Tongass, Second Edition: Pulp Politics and the Fight for the Alaska Rain Forest

Kathie Durbin

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Set in Alaska's coastal rain forest, Tongass is a story by turns dismaying and inspiring, of greed, courage, bare-knuckles politics, and the fate of a remote, wild, beautiful land. After World War II, the U.S. government lured two pulp companies to Southeast Alaska by promising them low-cost timber from the Tongass National Forest, the planet's largest coastal temperate rain forest. The mills brought jobs and growth to a sparsely settled region. They also wreaked ecological havoc and created a timber industry that broke labor unions, drove competitors out of business, and controlled politicians and the U.S. Forest Service. It took a national campaign, led by grassroots environmentalists, to bring sanity and sustainability to management of the Tongass. In her insightful account of Alaska's era of pulp, award-winning journalist Kathie Durbin draws on the voices of the people most affected: independent loggers who fought back when the pulp companies conspired to drive them out of business; courageous biologists who warned that logging was destroying critical fish and wildlife habitat; Tlingit Indians who saw their traditional hunting grounds vanish; young activists and lawyers who found their lives transformed by the battle for the Alaska rain forest. In this new edition, Durbin updates the story of the Tongass with a chapter describing political and economic development since 1999. Among the changes; a dramatic growth in cruise ship tourism, a new governor's plan for a system of roads and bridges to link remote Southeast Alaska communities, and a renewed push by the Forest Service under a timber-friendly administration in Washington, D.C., to open vast roadless areas to logging. Yet the fight for the Alaska rain forest is becoming a broader movement as appreciation for the true value of the region's wilderness grows.

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