



# Businesses want more recreation at Tongass National Forest

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JUNEAU, Alaska (AP) –

A group of 49 business owners in southeast Alaska wants the federal government to put more money into recreation opportunities at the Tongass National Forest.

The Juneau Empire reports (<http://bit.ly/1QGKwOk>) the group sent a letter in May asking lawmakers to consider the Tongass' recreation program when Forest Service funding is appropriated.

The group says the recreation budget has dropped 42 percent in the last six years.

Montana-based research firm Headwater Economics released a report in November saying the Tongass is spending more on its timber program than recreation.

Juneau Economic Development Council Director Brian Holst says the House and Senate had been expected to act on a Forest Service budget proposal this week.

He said the state needs improved access to recreation opportunities for its tourism industry to grow.

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Information from: Juneau (Alaska) Empire, <http://www.juneauempire.com>

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