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First name: Edward

Last name: Butler

Organization:

Title:

Official Representative/Member Indicator:

Address1: 36 E 69th St

Address2:

City: New York

State: NY

Province/Region: United States

Zip/Postal Code: 10021

Country: United States

Email: epb223@gmail.com

Phone: 3472661760

Comments:

I urge the Forest Service to keep your longstanding promise to protect the wild character of the entire Wilderness Study Area of the Chugach National Forest until Congress finalizes its protection. This means maintaining and clarifying rules on all land-based motorized uses, including chainsaw use, and preserving the area's current undeveloped and non-motorized character.

The 1.9 million eligible acres of the WSA and surrounding roadless lands eligible for wilderness should be designated as Wilderness. Do not abandon protection for the nearly 600,000 acres you propose to eliminate from the WSA.

I urge the Forest Service to reverse the recommendation to split the Wilderness Study Area into two smaller units. This would dramatically shrink the area by permanently stripping long-established protections for Knight Island, Columbia Glacier, Perry Island, Glacier Island, Culross Island, Esther Island, Port Wells, mainland Knight Island Passage, and Lake Nellie Juan.

The Service should prohibit recreational snowmobile use in the WSA. Snowmobile use has exploded in the WSA in recent years. Snow machines for subsistence and traditional uses may be allowed, but recreational snowmobile use is not.

Finally, management of the WSA should follow the Forest Service's Regional Office WSA direction, since ANILCA contains no substantive guidance on WSA protection.