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Comments:

Chugach Forest Plan Revision #40816

Ms. Terri Marceron, Forest Supervisor

Chugach National Forest

U.S. Forest Service

161 East 1st Ave., Door 8

Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Supervisor Marceron.

My name is Matt Kopec and along with my family, I operate Whittier Marine Charters and Whittier Boat Rental. Additionally, my family and I enjoy as much time as possible recreating in the Sound. As we began our commercial endeavor in 1998, I feel that I have a good understanding of how PWS and it's users have changed over recent time. I feel strongly that the success of my business as well as the overall quality of the "PWS experience" depends most heavily on the preservation of wilderness characteristics. My customers (both charter customers and bareboat renters) choose to explore PWS because of it's pristine feel, unaltered beauty, and seemingly abundant natural resources. Many are happily stunned by the lack of development and all are impressed when the Sound offers it's quiet and remote feel. There simply are not many, if any, places left in the world which offer an equal opportunity for serenity.

Over time, these qualities have been diminishing. A steady increase in boating volume since the Whittier tunnel opening, four relatively new lodges in the western Sound, four stroke outboards, improved electronics, an increase in commercial operations, and large hatchery salmon returns have all contributed to the erosion of PWS's wilderness characteristics. It is getting more and more difficult to find a cove without some type of structure or vessel, a beach that hasn't been littered with human waste and other garbage, or a fishing spot that isn't being competed for.

I urge you to consider the notion that your role is critical in the continuance of numerous businesses which depend on the current resources of PWS. Your role is also pivotal to current and future generations' understanding of wilderness. At the current rate of development, my young sons will not be able to experience Prince William Sound as I have.

Thank you for your time and this opportunity.

Matt Kopec