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Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Chugach National Forest forest plan revision! I have lived for the experience only offered throughout our National Forests for most of my life. My fondest memories growing up are all related to time with my friends and family in the National Forest. Throughout my lifetime, I have enjoyed the following means of recreation in the National Forest- snowmobiling, hiking, camping, fishing, riding motorcycles, riding bicycles, and 4 wheeling. Now as a 37 year old husband and father, I absolutely treasure every moment spent in the National Forest with my wife and two young daughters. Beyond that, my business is dependent on the National Forest and operates under 2 separate Special Use Permits in the Rio Grande National Forest located in southern Colorado.

While I have not yet visited the Chugach National Forest, it is high on my dream list of places to visit and recreate. I have numerous friends that call the area home and the terrain looks amazing for all types of recreation. Specifically, I really hope to explore this incredible area via snowmobile. In the 35+ years that I have been snowmobiling, not once have I ever heard any motorized winter user suggest that non-motorized users not be allowed to use the same area for recreation. We are not looking for exclusive access. I cannot say the same for non-motorized users. Unfortunately, non-motorized users have successfully gained exclusive access to hundreds of thousands of acres of public land. This on top of millions of acres of designated areas in which motorized users are already not allowed. It seems to be a never ending battle in which motorized users always lose. We all deserve equal access and should respect the choice of recreation of all people!

I hope to visit the Chugach National Forest to ride snowmobiles within the next few years. At that time, I sure hope areas such as Center Creek and Mills Creek remain open to motorized access. The surrounding areas greatly benefit economically from the spending of motorized users. This is very important for the future of the area, businesses, and many people.

It has become an epidemic in this country as we continue losing more and more PUBLIC land. I am strongly against losing any more acres of snowmobile terrain on the Kenai Peninsula. Alternatives C and D are UNACCEPTABLE!!!!!! An increase in backcountry recreation, quieter, more fuel efficient snowmobiles, and inconsistent snow at lower elevations are some of the reasons that we need to maintain the riding areas that we have today for future use. Aside from recreation, motorized access is instrumental for forest management along corridors such as 20 mile and South Fork of Snow River. Additionally, snowmobile trails can be very helpful for emergency access for any motorized or non-motorized incident.

Access in Alaska recently has been greatly affected by warmer winters. The EIS of the forest plan do not offer solutions addressing the issue.

It is completely inappropriate to recommend additional area for Wilderness designation in this forest plan. Any additional Wilderness will limit winter recreation opportunities and displace motorized users.

In closing, I choose OPTION B to preserve our recreational rights on PUBLIC lands. This is extremely important in numerous aspects to the local economy, heritage, tradition, and our general freedom. Thank you again for the opportunity to share my thoughts on this process.

