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First name: Annette

Last name: Ancel-Wisner

Organization:

Title:

Official Representative/Member Indicator:

Address1: 61 Ridgeway Dr

Address2:

City: Shell Lake

State: WI

Province/Region:

Zip/Postal Code: 54871

Country: United States

Email: annette317@gmail.com

Phone: 7154687779

Comments:

The mission of the Plan must be to protect the "wilderness character" of the WSA. The Forest Service's proposal to protect just its "existing character" is weak at best. The Plan must also protect the wilderness character of the lands in the WSA by classifying all of them with the Forest Service's "Primitive" standard--the most protective standard available in the agency's recreational classification system.

Strong protections need to be restored to the lands within the WSA that the federal government purchased following the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill. In order to keep the promise at the time of purchase/acquisition, these lands must serve the purpose of restoring wilderness values and must be managed "in perpetuity for conservation and wilderness purposes."

Ongoing illegal use of chainsaws in the WSA has resulted in damaging tree removal along dozens of wilderness beaches, including in sensitive areas and needs to be addressed by the Chugach NF.

Alternative D recommends the maximum amount of land for Wilderness of any of the Alternatives (97 percent of the WSA, or 1.884 million acres). I support a modified Alternative D wilderness recommendation that also includes Lake Nellie Juan and the lands within the WSA boundary that were purchased for restoration of wilderness resources following the oil spill.