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Comments:

Chugach National Forest's Supervisor's Office

Attn: Draft Land Management Plan

161 East 1st Avenue, Door 8,

Anchorage, AK 99501

November 1, 2018

Re: Comments on Chugach N.F. Draft Land Management Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Land Management Planning Committee,

Thank you for strengthening WSA management in response to 2016 comments. Please continue the work by making the following improvements to the proposed Forest Plan:

Do not backtrack on over thirty years of clear policy to protect the wilderness character of the WSA by promising only to protect its "existing character." Protecting the area's wilderness character is vital to maintaining healthy ecosystems and today's quiet, undeveloped conditions in western Prince William Sound.

Restore the WSA to the Forest Monitoring Program described in Appendix A. Monitoring in the WSA is necessary for informing the Forest Service about effective management, continued recovery of wilderness resources damaged during the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill (EVOS), and growth in snowmachine and other motorized uses.

Protect the lands within the WSA that were purchased by the federal government for restoration of wilderness resources following the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill disaster. The lands should be included in the WSA Management prescription (MA1), not the weaker "EVOS-acquired Lands" (MA6) prescription. The Forest Plan needs to make clear these lands are to be managed "in perpetuity for conservation and wilderness purposes," as promised when they were purchased in the aftermath of the Exxon oil spill.

The Chugach NF must address ongoing recreational use of chainsaws in the WSA. Every year this activity results in senseless damage to picturesque beaches through the removal of live trees and the historic "ghost trees" left behind by the 1964 Great Alaska Earthquake.

Continue to fine-tune WSA standards and guidelines so they protect the specific qualities of wilderness character, including its undeveloped and non-motorized natural settings. And adopt the Alternative D ROS map, which appropriately applies the Primitive standard to all WSA lands.

I support the Alternative D ROS map for Prince William Sound, which keeps the WSA in the Primitive category. I also 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 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill (EVOS). Not including the EVOS lands contradicts the commitment to manage them "in perpetuity for conservation and wilderness purposes."

Thank you for taking my comments into consideration.

Sincerely,

Janeen Hutchins
Girdwood, AK