March 14, 2021

To: Jennifer L. MacDonald

 USDA - Cordova

 Box

 Cordova, Ak 99574

 jennifer.l.macdonald@usda.gov

Subject: Cordova District Ranger District Guided Helicopter Skiing Project #59615

Ms Mcdonald:

I have been living in Cordova since 1987, and am very active in winter sports including snowshoeing, ice-skating and skiing. One of the things I value highly about Cordova is the ability to access outstanding winter recreation areas which are generally quiet and pristine.

I remember when Pts North was originally proposing a helicopter skiing operation based in Cordova. The town was supportive based on an agreement whereby helicopter noise would not be heard in town, and they would not use areas which were important for local recreation. We were concerned about the effect that helicopter traffic would have on the local residents who are generally limited to areas accessible from the road system.

I, and many other Cordovans heavily use some of the areas on the proposed expansion map. This includes hiking and/or skiing up the Power Creek Road and into the Power Creek Valley, ice-skating and cross-country skiing on Eyak Lake, skiing up the Scott River corridor towards the glacier, ice-skating on Sheridan Lake, and snowshoeing both Muskeg Meander and Pipeline Lake/McKinley Lake Trail, often exploring onto the slopes of the mountains beyond these trails. It appears from the scoping maps that all of these places would be in the permitted area. While helicopter skiiers would not necessarily be skiing where I was, they would be flying directly overhead and landing nearby which would have a major effect on my experience in the backcountry.

It also seems that the city strip might be used for helicopter operations as this would minimize flying disturbance to the town? However, there are a significant number of people who live near the city strip, along the shores of Lake Eyak and at six-mile who would be affected by the noise. In addition, using the Scott and Sheridan River corridors to access terrain would mean helicopters flying directly over locals recreating in those areas.

I think Pts North has been of great benefit to the town and their operation fits in well. However, I would like some serious rethinking of how some of the proposed expansion would so negatively affect local residents.

Elizabeth Senear

Cordova, AK 99574