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Title:

Comments: Dear Ms. Marceron,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Chugach National Forest Plan Revision. I reside in Cordova and spend time enjoying our public lands for recreation and subsistence, I feel very lucky to call Cordova my home.

There are two major points that I would like to focus on for the plan revisions:

First, the inclusion of trail building with multiple uses in mind- specifically bicyclists. The use of very narrow raised boardwalks and stairs makes cycling in otherwise wonderful landscape difficult, if not impossible. I believe that the people enjoying the Chugach would greatly benefit from trails built for a more diverse user group. Improving and expanding our trail system to accommodate bicycles, would also benefit XC skiers and snowshoers as well as hikers that may have difficulty in more rugged terrain. This would not only encourage people to enjoy our surrounding forests, but also help grow a non-consumptive tourism industry, benefiting our local and statewide economy. The use of tight switchbacks, stairs, narrow boardwalks and ladders as are found on many of the Cordova District trails does not work well with keeping multiple uses in mind.

Second, and a deep concern of mine- is a Wilderness designation, which I generally oppose. Over the years a wilderness designation has come to prohibit the use of bicycles (being mechanized vehicles) in areas listed as such. I can agree with the limited use of motorized vehicles (including electric vehicles) in certain areas, but feel that banning bicycles is an unnecessary and misguided approach to protecting sensitive areas. I am supportive of an overall redefinition of the Wilderness designation to allow for bicycles and other non-motorized travel.

I realize that building and maintaining trails in sensitive areas can be challenging, but I believe that it's important for the trails in the area to reflect the current and future users in that area.

Once again thank you for the opportunity to comment on this revision as we look forward to many more years in this wild part of Alaska.

Best regards,

Ryan Schuetze