

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 2/15/2016 12:00:00 AM

First name: Perry

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Organization: SOUND PADDLER

Title: Owner

Comments: Letter to Ms. Terri Marceron, Forest Supervisor, is attached to this comment

Ms. Terri Marceron

February 15, 2016

Forest Supervisor

Chugach National Forest

101 East 1st Avenue, Room 8

Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Re: Chugach Nat'l Forest Plan Revision

Sent also via email to chugachplanrevision@fs.fed.us

Greetings Ms. Marceron,

Thank you for taking the time to read our concerns. My wife Lois and I operate SOUND PADDLER out of Whittier in Prince William Sound. Our business is the original outfitter to introduce sea kayaking in Prince William Sound to Alaskans and paddlers from all over the world. Kayakers come for the unspoiled beauty and wilderness character so easily accessible and affordable. Many of our clients have never seen wilderness in this natural setting.

It seems common sense would dictate the continued protection of the Wilderness Study Area (WSA). I would hope that my children, your children and their children would want to see this wilderness unspoiled as well. Please keep the long standing promise of protection until Congress acts on the wilderness designation. It seems we've been waiting for so long since our business opening in 1981.

Although my main concern is of the WSA, I would not be against uses outside the WSA, such as snowmobile grooming up at Turnagain Pass. A letter from Robert York dated 2/11/16 asks for support of this kind of activity to encourage opportunity for people of varying ages, ability levels and fitness. I would also support this use of the Chugach. Recreational snowmobile use should NOT be considered on the WSA. In a letter from Joshua Slagle dated 2/11/2016, he claims that recreational snowmobiling is a "traditional use". He couldn't be further from the facts. Traditional use of a snowmobile was for subsistence, hunting for food and wood to sustain the life of a family and village, not recreational riding. As an Iditarod finisher, traveling from village to village, the snowmobile is a transportation tool or for checking a trapline. You see no running off the trail to high mark a hill or any recreational riding at all. That would be very inefficient and costly to a villager.

As far as native use for subsistence, the villages needs are the exception. Chugach Alaska Corporation sent a letter June 15, 2015. In that letter, David Phillips asks the Forest Service to find a balance and provide for the sustainability of the villages in Prince William Sound. I fully support their rights and encourage you to act for their benefit. Jobs are important to give the youth a reason to stay and grow in the village. Opportunities are few and the culture and history need to be maintained. Although I would not like to see logging, if allowed, I would hope that re-planting the forest for the future, would be a part of that plan.

In conclusion, keep protections in place for the WSA while we wait for Congress. Other areas in the Chugach need common sense management to still protect the value of the land and water. Thanks again for your consideration. Perry Solmonson

Perry & Lois Solmonson - SOUND PADDLER

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