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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I have attached my comments in the form of a document below.

February 19, 2016

Comments to the Proposed Revised Land Management Plan (PRLMP)
for the Chugach National Forest, Alaska

From: Seawan Gehlbach, resident of Cordova, Alaska

I live, work and recreate in and around the Chugach National Forest (CNF) and have for the past 22 years.

The "Proposed Revised Land Management Plan" proposes unnecessary changes to our current Land Management Plan for the Chugach National Forest. Our current management plan is working well and has mechanisms for addressing specific projects.

The unrevised Forest Plan currently used for management of the Chugach National Forest (CNF) and its Wildness Study Area (WSA) is consistent with the needs of local resident user groups. It allows for commercial fishery uses, subsistence harvesting uses and recreation. As the PRLMP states, the current WSA management "supports subsistence uses, a robust recreation and tour economy and a commercial fishing industry while maintaining wilderness character." Yes, great - keep it this way. WSA boundaries should not be diminished. With increasing users and pressure to over develop resources, a conservation approach to managing the Chugach National Forest needs to be maintained.

If any revisions are made I support the following:

- USFS should work to obtain subsurface rights to surface lands they already manage for conservation.

- there should be no increase in helicopter or airboat allowances.

- Elodea eradication should be a priority

- the primary "changing condition" within the CNF is the increase in user numbers. In light of this we need to maintain, not diminish, current user restrictions.

These time dictated Plan revisions take too long, are expensive and cumbersome. A Plan needs to be written with mechanisms for adaptation along the way not complete upheaval every few years. Why make changes when residents are becoming familiar with the processes and the management direction of the current plan.

As for the written PRLMP document itself - it is so convoluted with definitions of terms and "Parts" that real information regarding what is proposed to change is nearly unobtainable. I referenced the "Changes to the Forest Plan" section, hoping to find the proposed changes, but instead found another procedural definition for making an amendment. Not helpful. It is very useful when revising a document or plan to present proposed changes alongside current content, especially if you want and value feedback.

I want future generations to have economic opportunity and viable commercial fisheries in Prince William Sound. I also want future generations of fish, wildlife and humans to enjoy the wildness of the Chugach National Forest.

These goals can be obtained with good management of this amazing place.

Thank you for your service to our Forest.