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Organization: AK SNOW SHREDDERS 2.0

Title:

Comments: Hello and thank you for your efforts and willingness to include all user groups in the Chugach Forest Service Revision Plan.

I am a born and raised Trapper Creek kid who grew up at the base of Denali. As a young girl I would do whatever I could to be outside. Whether it be riding my snowmachine during the long Alaskan winters or riding my horse and dirt bike during the summer. I grew up living and breathing in the freedom of my roots, which shaped me into the person I am today. I'm writing today in regards to that freedom.

I fell in love with Turnagain Pass a little short of 7 years ago. It quickly became one of my most cherished spots to ride. I spend nearly every weekend during the winter days exploring and savoring the fascinating terrain of the Chugach. Throughout the years I've scouted new ground ranging from Nellie Juan to Johnsons Pass, over to Squirrel Flats and Skookum Glacier. However, my love for exploring these beautiful areas is currently being threatened by the unethical Alternatives of C and D that have been laid before us. Therefore, C and D are NOT acceptable. I'm encouraging you to look deeper into these plans. As deep as your first opening day in Turnagain Pass. These alternatives threaten to take away the rights we have as a motorized community to explore and relish in these beautiful landscapes. Meaning those weekend trips I take down the coast line that are followed by the best pow days of my life, quality time with my friends (my winter family), delicious burgers from Chair 5, (or - sometimes those gas station chicken strips) are being jeopardized.

Alternative B has potential, but with modifications to be added. The sled community has increased dramatically in size throughout the years. This means; booming economy for our small businesses, jobs for our people, and the ability to explore land we never imagined possible. There are already measures implemented by CNAIF that prohibits riding sleds in area with inadequate snow cover. This minimizes the impact of the environment while allowing users to explore and enjoy the park. This keeps the impact to the environment minimal and non-invasive. New technology means cleaner engines, fuel efficiency that'll take us further into the mountains, and lighter machines that have little to no collision to the snow fallen terrain. The sled industry is improving every year, why try to take away places to explore when we should be adding them?

As far as I can see it, the more lands given to ride means more hungry riders at the end of the day (headed to local restaurants), more fuel purchased (money to local gas stations), new sled purchases (more jobs and cash flow to local motorsport shops). You break the wheel to this cycle; you'll be seeing a dramatic effect to families and small business owners. The money helped to support these businesses will move elsewhere to places that are open and welcoming to these sorts of activities.

However, it applies to more than just the sledders. When you ride your fat tire bike out to Skookum glacier, what trails do you ride? Strictly trails made by fat tire bicyclists or trails smoothed out by skiers? The chances of that are slim. I've personally witnessed people riding and skiing out further than ever before due to the convenience of a track laid down by a snowmachine. For instance if a skier is to break trail miles away from any road or trailhead and is hurt in the process or possibly caught in an avalanche, how would you find them? The most efficient and fastest way to do so would be on a motorized vehicle to cover ground in search for them. Here's a short story as an example:

Sometime last year some fellow riders and I were coming home after a long day in the mountains when we happened to notice a pile of bicycles along the side of the trail. Moments later one of the members from our crew radioed out stating he had found a bunch of kids lost down the way from where we had found the bikes. The group consisted of one young man and three young girls about half way out to Skookum Glacier. Once we

arrived we asked if they needed any help. Mind you, each of them wearing sneakers and not one with gloves or a hat in their possession. They had told us they were trying to find their way to the glacier when they decided to ditch the bikes and walk the rest of the way. Once they realized it was getting dark and they were nowhere near the road, without any cell service, they started to panic. Roughly about the same time we stumbled upon them. So we provided them with extra gear, strapped their bikes to our sleds, and brought them all back to the parking lot before night rolled in. Safely.

I stop and wonder, without access to the areas, without permission to explore, what would have become of those kids? How long would it have been before anyone noticed they were missing? Then how long would it take for first responders to find them? So many different outcomes to a story that had a happy ending, simply due to the fact we were out there. Why cut the access to these places? Why take away from different groups? We all want to explore and enjoy what Alaska has to offer. We just all do it a little differently, and I believe we can benefit from one another.

This is my home, and the motorized industry has grown me into the person I am today. My sled kept me away from all the bad decisions I was subjected to in rural Alaska. Riding kept me away from drugs, it kept me active, and it kept me healthy. I can only hope that those same benefits will continue to help grow our families into healthy lifestyles, as long as they have the access to do so.

I have always known this place would be my forever home. The mountains call, I go. The rivers rush, so I fish. The leaves change colors, and I switch from summer toys to winter toys. I have been more than spoiled to have this sort of freedom living in a place that provides so much opportunity. Anywhere else would tell you different, but not The Great State. I know my heart wouldn't be the same without the Chugach. So again, I urge you to please keep an open mind about shutting down our zones and opening up more for the motorized community. It's important for our growth, our families, our economy, and our souls.

Sincerely,

Dove Pauline Daniels

Attachment: image