

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/31/2018 8:00:00 AM

First name: Callie

Last name: Dietrich

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello,

My name is Callie Dietrich and I am a lifelong Alaskan. Some of the greatest moments of my life have been in the mountains with family and friends while hiking, cross country skiing, snowmachining, four wheeling, and biking. I grew up in a rural area near the Matanuska Glacier and, for me, mechanized modes of transportation are a way of life. These forms of recreation enrich the economy as well as community.

A little girl I have memories of going to Thompson Pass with my dad, which evolved to me going as a young adult with friends. Skiing and snowboarding in Chugach National Forrest (CNF) via snowmachine access has defined who I am. Attached you will find a picture of my husband and I snowboarding together in an area accessed by snowmachine. As an adult, I live in Anchorage and recreate on the CNF often. While the majority of my recreating is in a nonmotorized capacity, expanding motorized and mechanized transportation in CNF is beneficial for Alaskans.

So much of Alaska's vast wilderness is accessible to very few people. Mechanized transportation allows residents and tourists to experience the energy and solitude that is so hard to find in most people's day to day. For me, this feeling of solitude while being in wilderness is so important to keeping me grounded and sane. Mechanized transport allows folks to go much farther than you can on foot. Alaska is so vast that using these modes of transportation is paramount to exploration, and even then most places are off limits because the terrain is prohibitive. In some cases, snowmachine routs have been used by first responders for both nonmotorized and motorized users. For these reasons, I oppose losing any more acres of snowmachine terrain on the Kenai Peninsula.

So much of the debate for Wilderness designation comes from people not wanting noise, not wanting the land to be disturbed, and not wanting other people to be where that person can be. In my experience, is extremely rare to find evidence in the summer that a particular area had snowmachine use- they don't disturb the tundra, they are on the snow. When I hear the noise of a snowmachine, I can feel the energy in my chest and I think, "that person is having some fun." When I see other people recreating where I am, I am not angry. I feel happy to see people out enjoying this land however they can. That's the Alaskan way. I oppose further appropriation of land for Wilderness designation.

When it comes to policy, I am a firm believer in utilitarianism- doing the greatest good for the greatest amount of people. For this reason and the reasons listed above, I support responsible mechanized transport expansion in the CNF. I support plan B and strongly oppose plans C and D. I believe Alaskans should be able to ride their snowmachines, bicycles, and low speed electric bicycles (which are federally classified as a bicycle) in the CNF.

I love Alaska, and I love experiencing it through mechanized transport. Do not take this land away from Alaskans.

Respectfully,

?Callie Dietrich

attachment: image