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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Chugach Comment

To whom it may concern,

I am an outdoor enthusiast. I participate in a multitude of non-mechanized, mechanized, and motorized activities, including: Hiking, Hunting, Fishing, Climbing, Mountain Biking, Dirt-Biking, and Snowmobiling, to name a few. I do not support closing or limiting access for motorized users, in any form.

My absolute primary concern is that public lands remain public, and that includes access for all user groups. Already, Wilderness extends across over 57 million acres of Alaska, totaling over ½ of the state's acreage (wilderness.net). I must beg you to consider lands already having attained Wilderness-status as not only sufficient, but as providing a landscape for those who wish to enjoy a more solitary experience, free from mechanized or motorized users. With over 50% of Alaska in Wilderness, there is more than enough room for those who wish to recreate apart from motorized/mechanized users. The Chugach is a magical place, and the public should continue to have access to experience it.

Motorized/mechanized access continues to shrink, which is not providing equitable access to each user group. Motorized recreation contributes nearly \$60B worth of economic impact, according to the BEA, which is important to mention. Motorized users, additionally, are one of the only user-groups that pay-to-play. Those funds, in addition to motorized RTP funding provide a value to the entire recreation community, in the form of grooming programs, volunteer efforts, tourism marketing, law enforcement, and the overall recreation experience. Even non-motorized users greatly benefit because of how snowmobiling builds a recreation platform.

In closing, over the past few decades, public access to public lands continues to diminish. I support equitable access and use to be shared across the user groups. With less than 50% of public lands accessible to motorized/mechanized users because of Wilderness, it's time to provide an increase in lands accessible by snowmobiles. I want my children to be able to experience public lands, however they choose. I do not wish for my children to be so limited, that recreation is impossible. Public lands are one of the greatest parts of being American. Please don't take that away.

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