

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 2/9/2016 12:00:00 AM

First name: Carsen

Last name: Sorensen

Organization:

Title:

Comments: The Chugach National Forest, is to many people, the greatest national forest in all of Alaska, if not the world. For some, it is possibly the only one they have had the splendor to experience. That being said, it also contains a great amount of the most accessible trails and mountainous terrain in the most centrally located, and heavily populated of Alaska. Both Non-Motorized and Motorized users take to this spectacular area for Summer, but mainly Winter recreation, which in a place that is covered in snow for 9/12 of the year, is a great thing because of the location, terrain and accessibility. Even in the recent low-snow years many people use the area, because they love it, and not because they have no choice. Every year there is a different place with more snow than the other, but people still itch to go to the Chugach because they love it, and its not just motorized users, who choose to go there even when there is better snow elsewhere, but the non-motorized users who could also choose another location to ski, snowboard or hike.

This area is definitely loved by many, and I don't think it would be in the best interest of ANYONE to exclude a certain group of people, for any certain reason. The Chugach is delicate, yes, but so is everywhere in the beautiful state, and turning any one group of users of this area away would possibly result in the loss of the other group, and then where would everyone flock to?

Who knows.. Possibly the dangerous Talkeetna mountains, as that area is the next closest place with similar terrain. This would cause much more emissions being produced through travel from say Seward or Homer or Kenai, as well as Anchorage. This would also cause more wear and tear on the roads to and from those places. This would also cause more traffic and people to a smaller area to create a crowding problem which could cause tension between people. All in all, its a lose - lose situation for everyone.

We all have heard that snowmachines create ecological damage, but what doesn't these days? People have been enjoying the Chugach for so long, without much resulting damage, so why change that now, to put people more in harms way? I believe that the Chugach should stay open for both users as we have gotten along for very long, under this current plan. Revising would be smart to help possibly prevent any ecological damage that could be done, by maybe trading off non-motorized areas and motorized areas every set amount, possibly 2 a good number to keep people wanting more and more to play in each zone, of years to allow any damage done by either snowmachiners or skiers/snowboarders/hikers to regrow and come back stronger. This would eliminate any damage that could be potentially done, as well as preserving this wonderful place for many generations to come.

Not to mention the benefits of trail creation and zone finding for both parties. As well as the amount of income local businesses, from Anchorage to Homer and Seward bring in and jobs they create during the long winter months. I hope that some day, mine and others's children will be able to explore this magnificent piece of Alaskan backcountry.