

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 2/12/2016 1:09:32 AM

First name: Mary E.

Last name: Vermeulen, Ed. D.

Organization:

Title:

Comments: \* Keep your longstanding PROMISE to protect the wild character of the entire Wilderness Study Area until Congress finalizes its protection. This means maintaining and clarifying rules on all land-based motorized uses-including chainsaw use-and preserving the area's current undeveloped and non-motorized character.

\* Recommend the 1.9 million eligible acres of the WSA and surrounding roadless lands eligible for wilderness designation as Wilderness. Do not abandon protection for the nearly 600,000 acres you propose to eliminate from the WSA.

\* Reverse the terrible recommendation to split the Wilderness Study Area into two smaller units. This would dramatically shrink the area by permanently stripping long-established protections for Knight Island, Columbia Glacier, Perry Island, Glacier Island, Culross Island, Esther Island, Port Wells, mainland Knight Island Passage, and Lake Nellie Juan.

\* PROHIBIT recreational snowmobile use in the WSA. Snowmobile use has exploded in the WSA in recent years. Snow machines for subsistence and traditional uses may be allowed, but recreational snowmobile use is NOT.

\* Management of the WSA should follow the Forest Service's Regional Office WSA direction, since ANILCA contains no substantive guidance on WSA protection.

The American public puts its trust in the forest service to manage our most precious public land in a responsible manner. THE FOREST SERVICE NEEDS TO REMEMBER THAT TRUST AND THEIR PROMISE TO KEEP WILDERNESS AS WILDERNESS. In the past few years, I have noticed that a great deal of our public land throughout the United States has been subject to mining, drilling, and recently, fracking---all types of "harvesting" by private companies for profit. And, mind you, it is not profit for the public, it is profit for the private company. How is this a right thing"? Would Teddy Roosevelt approve? I think not.

Now we are told that the forest service is once again prepared to offer our natural resources to private entities so that they may use up our resources and blight the beauty of this land in the process of making profits.

"In the Chugach National Forest, the Forest Service is entrusted to manage some of Alaska's most treasured wild lands in the Congressionally-designated 2 million-acre Nellie Juan-College Fiord WSA." The Forest Service is considering allowing residential timber harvests, expanded motorized uses, manipulation of habitats, mining, and helicopter-assisted skiing and hiking-would harm this beautiful Wilderness Study Area. It certainly does defy any insight into the American soul let alone common sense. The lower forty-eight has been screwed up. DO NOT SCREW UP ALASKA.

Instead, the Forest Service should carefully maintain current protections and recommend to Congress its perpetuation FOREVER. This world-class wild area DESERVES permanent protection now and far into the future! OUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN deserve to see and enjoy the beauty of these public lands that Teddy Roosevelt foresaw as necessary to our collective well being and joy. To give this land away to private companies for their profits is nonsensical and irresponsible and absolutely wrong. John Muir, Teddy Roosevelt, and the thousands of United States citizens who appreciate our wild and wonderful public lands are watching