

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 2/12/2016 5:55:09 AM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I OPPOSE the USFS's proposal which would loosen protections throughout the Nellie Juan-College Fiord WSA and permanently remove protections from some of its most important places.

These protections have been in place for almost forty years and your wanting to weaken them will hurt the wilderness character of this magnificent WSA. Obviously special interest groups are driving this horrible proposal since it includes residential timber harvests, expanded motorized uses, manipulation of habitats, mining, and helicopter-assisted skiing and hiking. This is a giveaway to all these groups who already have enough areas to enjoy their hobbies and to those industries who destroy the land by mining and logging. Do we have to open up all our wild areas to every interest group? What about the people who want to keep as many places as wild as possible, so we can have quiet places to retreat to, and where the animals can live in safety without losing their homes to logging and mining, or being overwhelmed by noise which interferes with their ability to thrive.

Therefore, I urge the Chugach National Forest to:

- \* 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.

In the wild and untouched Chugach National Forest, the Forest Service has been entrusted to manage some of Alaska's most treasured wild lands in the Congressionally-designated 2 million-acre Nellie Juan-College Fiord WSA, not allow it to be destroyed/overused by whatever interest group thinks it has a right to do so. Allowing residential timber harvests, expanded motorized uses, manipulation of habitats, mining, and helicopter-assisted skiing and hiking- would harm this beautiful Wilderness Study Area. This is unconscionable.

I urge the Forest Service to maintain current protections and recommend to Congress its perpetuation into the future. This world-class wild area deserves permanent protection now and far into the future and should not be allowed to be ruined for future generations by today's selfish special interest groups who care only about their own desires with zero regard about how their actions may destroy this beautiful place forever.