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Title:

Comments: Fish and Wildlife says it values comments from the Public. How many times does Fish and Wildlife do the will of the Public when it comes to protecting wilderness areas like the Nellie Juan-College Fiord Wilderness Study Area (WSA)?

You are entrusted to manage the Chugash National Forest. It is with great sadness and dread that I read you are planning to loosen environmental protections and shrink the size of the study areas, and are planning to open up over 600,000 acres up one of that last wilderness areas on earth of this size and importance to deforestation, permanent pollution through mining (air and water pollution and worse), allowing motorized vehicles such as recreational snowmobiles. This may be one of the last rainforests of its size for our climate. Instead of permanently removing protections so that a few fossil fuel billionaire companies can rape a magnificent wilderness, how about doing your job to protect it in perpetuity?

I'm sure you are well aware that Premier Harper is being pressured by Chinese investors to sell out its coastal areas for exploitation and ownership by China, who wants fossil fuel export ports and shipping of raw bitumen. Does this make ANY sense to a sane person to allow this to happen along our precious and vulnerable coastlines where the few rainforests we have are left? Knowing how important rainforests are to climate stability, how could you allow logging?

The Aboriginals and we coastal people have a close relationship with these environments; we honor them. We think they are sacred; that every tree and animal and fish in these areas has the right to live. We live in harmony with our environment. We are glad there are wilderness areas to be protected. Our fragile coastal waterways and nearshore wetlands provide us abundance in food. Their beauty soothes the souls of people who are stuck in cities, and come here to relax and wonder at the beauty. It is our duty and HONOR to protect them. Please change course immediately and stop this madness where only a greedy few will profit.

I live in the U.S. San Juan Islands where we fight for our lives while our government agencies betray us and betray aboriginal hunting and fishing treaty rights again. And for what? If you need a reminder of what's at stake, google Lake Polley and look what was done to a pristine wilderness area. Look at the Columbia river, being daily polluted with Hanford radioactive waste. Your actions to permanently reduce strong protections sends the message that you would rather kill of a wilderness than manage it. Management is more than making a few bucks. It's doing the will of the people most impacted, and insuring that future generations will have places that are not ruined by the filth of the fossil fuel industry.

That you would consider endangering an area rich with fiords (an area I've only dreamed of going!) construes corruption and even insanity. Think how it will be. Look at what has happened with pipelines and oil spills. Then please come to your senses and call off this plan that can only be fueled by greed!

We propose that you:

- * 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.

* Follow the Forest Service's Regional Office WSA direction, since ANILCA contains no substantive guidance on WSA protection.