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Organization:

Title:

Comments: In regards to Chugach Forest Plan Revision #40816,

As a property owner on Latouche Island within western Prince William Sound I write today urging that the Forest Management Plan adopt only the most stringent protections for these areas. Wilderness designation is totally appropriate for these portions of the Chugach National Forest. Indeed the wilderness characteristics of the western sound are presently under assault from increased access due to the Whittier tunnel and improved harbor facilities. Logging and now mining on Native lands in the northern Sound have destroyed wilderness vistas which decrease its tourism value. Wilderness tourism is an industry with light impacts which will become ever more important to Alaska as we shift away from a resource extraction based economy and strive for a more sustainable future. Western PWS also serves as a refugia and control study area for climate change impacts to sensitive species. Increased habitat disruption and loss from logging and mining destroys the research value of this unique area and should not be allowed. Lastly public fuel sales and promotion of motorized recreation are also incompatible with low impact non motorized users who value being able to hear the crack of calving glacier or the call of a black oyster catcher. A single personal watercraft can disrupt the experience of multiple groups of kayakers during the day. Users should encouraged to find low impact non-motorized ways to enjoy the forest. There has been a proliferation of hardened campsites, tree cutting and litter from increased pleasure boat access in the last ten years. Permits for floating lodges, fuel sales and motorsport races or derby's should be disallowed. Compromise between user groups of this - one of the few remaining near pristine areas of National Forest is not a viable option. It's not a true compromise when you're discussing the last 10% of something. You can't make new wilderness, you can only preserve what little we have left for our children to experience.

Thank you, Gary Lawley