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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Forest Service,

If the FS allows residential timber harvest, expanded motorized use, mining, and helicopter-assisted skiing and hiking...the Wilderness Study Area would be irreversibly degraded. Instead, the Forest Service should maintain current protections and recommend to Congress its perpetuation into the future. This wild area deserves permanent protection. I submit the wild character of the entire Wilderness Study Area sta protected 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.

I ask the FS to:

- * 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 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.

Thank you,
James Cronin