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First name: Colin

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hi there and good day,

I am a pilot for Chugach Powder Guides heli ski operations. I have had the privilege of this title for 5 years.

While I am not a full-time resident of Alaska at this point, my family and I have been in years prior, and still continue to make Girdwood, Alaska a seasonal residence during the heli-ski operations.

As I understand it, the areas we refer to as Center and Divide Creeks are being considered for non-motorized access.

I am sure there are many interests in this matter and many opinions, and I now offer mine.

I would like to keep these areas open to helicopter based ski activities. We have been consistent users of this area during my tenure, and certainly prior to me as well. As an operation that is required to apply for, and receive, permits to legally conduct operations we are transparent with a broad base of relationships across the Western Chugach. While I may not be a full time resident of the area, most employed by the Chugach Powder Guides are. If they aren't working in a direct capacity for CPG they can be found in the backcountry ski touring, kayaking, climbing or biking.

As such I feel the organization of Chugach Powder Guides have managed to achieve a level of harmony across a broad base of interests from the National Forest to local recreational users. Simply put, CPG are not just motorized users of the area. Distinctly, CPG is a helicopter operation that typically employs local people to take guests on guided ski tours of a vast swath of the Western Chugach, including the Center and Divide creeks. To restrict our access to this area, in my opinion, would be foolish. We are vastly different from any other set of motorized users, and beholden to an entirely different set of criteria as currently permitted users of the land.

I hope that we, as a heli-ski operator are allowed continued use of these awesome areas.

Thanks very much,

Colin Burton