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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I appreciate you considering my suggestions for improving the new Chugach Forest Plan.

1. Please keep the non-motorized portion of the Turnagain Pass area as fully non-motorized. I note that grooming was conducted, using motorized equipment, this winter on the non-motorized side. This defeats the purpose of maintaining a backcountry area. For decades, families have been able to enjoy Nordic skiing in Turnagain Pass without the need of motorized grooming. Are we now raising outdoor enthusiasts who need others to smooth out the very challenges of the backcountry that make it so rewarding? Grooming a Nordic ski track could certainly be done on the motorized side of the pass. Grooming is also available all over Anchorage and Girdwood. No motorized grooming, for any type of activity, on the non-motorized area of Turnagain Pass.
2. Please do not remove any areas from wilderness designation. I urge you to reinsert the areas that were removed from wilderness study area designation in the proposed new plan. These areas are best preserved for the activities they currently offer: fishing, hiking, berry picking, photography, whale and bird watching. Do not allow any timber harvest, however limited, or any motorized use within these areas. The recreational and economic opportunities currently provided are appropriate for the present times.
3. Please don't create separate areas for different types of motorized users. The pressure to expand more areas for motorized use will increase if there has to be areas for helicopters, areas for snow machines, areas for ski planes, etc. The Chugach National Forest can offer world-class experiences to both non-motorized and motorized user groups. This will not be the case if motorized use areas expand merely to keep the different motorized users separate from each other. Motorized users of the forest often say they won't mind sharing space with non-motorized users. Let them share space with each other.
4. Please don't create any zones set aside for only commercial operations. The forest belongs to the public and the public should maintain access rights to all of it.

I'm well into my third decade of enjoying the Chugach National Forest. Thank you for considering my comments and all the best to you in completing this important project.