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Comments: HUNTING & HUNTING PRACTICES

The Forest Service should follow the National Park Service's and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services example by prohibiting or proposing to prohibit egregious methods and means. These would include taking of all bears over bait, taking bears using traps and snares, and using such means that will endanger non-target animals and be potentially dangerous to human health and safety. The Forest Service has done a very poor job of protecting healthy wildlife populations on the Forest evidenced by depleted populations of furbearers throughout. The Forest Service has almost entirely or entirely abrogated its responsibility for wildlife management to the State of Alaska whose charges and interests are not lawfully, scientifically, or ethically the same.

RECREATION OPPORTUNITY SPECTRUM CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

The maximum party size depicted in Table 3 appear far too high basic on my extensive backcountry recreational experiences, and in my opinion should be halved. Areas like Prince William Sound are already witnessing significant signs of overuse owing to large group sizes and frequency.

MANAGEMENT AREA MANAGEMENT DIRECTION

The Forest Service should not take any measures to degrade the wilderness attributes of the Wilderness Study Areas (WSA) and in fact should pursue recommending them for full Wilderness protection under the 1964 Wilderness Act. The proposed Plan changes are not acceptable and at the very least contradicts the spirit of ANLCA. The Plan should include justifications for the proposed actions. A full Environmental Impact analysis may be required given the significance of the Plan changes. The adverse changes include:

*Eliminating 600,000 acres form the WSA.

*Splitting the WSA into smaller units thereby compromising the integrity of the WSA.

*Permitting incompatible uses such as snowmachining, ORV use, logging, and helicopter access for recreational and study purposes.

The Forest Service has done a very poor job of protecting the wilderness attributes of the Forest by prioritizing intensive recreation over passive recreation which I and many other have commented about on previous Forest Plans.