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First name: Richard

Last name: DiJulia

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I have been a sea kayak guide based out of Whittier for the previous 7 summers, and have spent much of my free time exploring Prince William Sound via sea kayak.

I feel that Prince William Sound is a spectacular place and a true gem of Alaska and our country. The beauty and wilderness are valuable resources that should be managed sustainably. I think it deserves our respect and protection, so that it can be preserved in its most wild state for generations.

Currently, I feel the Sound sees an incredibly high number of users including, but not limited to, sightseeing tours and other eco-tourism, cruise ships with thousands of passengers each, commercial fishing fleets, State Ferries, oil tankers and thousands of recreational boaters. The impact made on the land by this high use is great, with literally tons of trash and human feces in the tidelines and campsites, and near constant noise pollution.

I would like to see the forest service have more of an education presence at the docks in Whittier, and also offer free instruction outreach events teaching leave no trace principles targeting recreational users in Anchorage and the Matanuska Valley, the larger population base of users to Prince William Sound. This has been successful for the CNFAIC educating backcountry skiers, riders and snow machine users in Girdwood and Anchorage, and I think it could work well with boaters and other users. I am excited that so many people are appreciating, recreating and making a career in this wonderful place, but afraid of the negative effects of such high use. I think if the proposed Nellie Juan-College Fjord wilderness study area was made into a proper Wilderness Area, it would give the Forest Service power to enforce these sustainable practices.

I think it would be beneficial to manage the Sound, similarly to how Turnagain Pass is managed in the winter, in that some areas are for motorized users, and some are for non-motorized. I think this would allow non-motorized users an opportunity for a wilderness experience, that is often challenging to find in areas of motorized use.

I also feel there needs to be more enforcement in terms of littering/dumping, waste management, live tree cutting and other behaviors that negatively impact the environment. If the user doesn't recognize the value of keeping an area pristine, there needs to be another incentive for them to follow the rules and treat the land with respect.

I think it would be helpful to introduce relatively low-impact things such as bear hang cables or food lockers, pit toilets and in some cases fire pits in the high use areas throughout the sound, especially within 30 miles of Whittier. I think this would encourage simple and easy compliance, and ultimately reduce the human impact on the high use areas. Also, I think it would be beneficial to introduce a few more hardened campsites in this higher use area, concentrating use to a few places rather than encouraging users to create new sites.

Although it seems contradictory, I am generally not in favor of more enforcement and regulations, but it often saddens me to see how this land is treated and I feel like something needs to be done. I don't know if the suggestions I've made are the right answers, but I know we can do better to protect this amazing place.