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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Forest Supervisor,

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the draft plan. I appreciate that the Chugach has been responsive to the public's desire for strong protections for the WSA in the Prince William Sound.

As someone who has worked in Prince William Sound, and has recreated in the CNF for 20 years, and plans to continue recreating and spending time in these areas, I have a vested interest in what happens to these public lands.

I support a modified Alternative D that also recommends for Wilderness Lake Nellie Juan and the lands within the WSA boundary that were purchased for restoration of wilderness resources following the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill (EVOS). Not including the EVOS lands in the final plan would contradict the commitment that the Forest Service made to the public when it purchased these lands. I also suggest that you make the following additional improvements to the revised Forest Plan:

- Do not backtrack on over thirty years of clear policy to protect the wilderness character of the WSA by promising only to protect its "existing character." Protecting the area's wilderness character is vital to maintaining healthy ecosystems and today's quiet, undeveloped conditions in western Prince William Sound.
- Restore the WSA to the Forest Monitoring Program described in Appendix A. Monitoring in the WSA is necessary for informing the Forest Service about effective management, continued recovery of wilderness resources damaged during the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill (EVOS), and growth in snowmachine and other motorized uses.
- Continue to fine-tune WSA standards and guidelines so they protect the specific qualities of wilderness character, including its undeveloped and non-motorized natural settings. And adopt the Alternative D ROS map, which appropriately applies the Primitive standard to all WSA lands.
- Given the differences in use, access, and setting on the forest during winter, the Forest Service must develop a winter-specific ROS map.
- Given that state politicians are pursuing Rulemaking to carve out an exemption to the National Roadless Rule for Alaska, the Chugach should incorporate specific protections for lands comprised of Inventoried Roadless Areas.

Thank you for your hard work and consideration,
Sarah M Heck