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First name: Andy

Last name: Lockhart

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello,

My name is Andy and I live here in Anchorage and spend a lot of my free time enjoying everything about Chugach National Forest.

My family and I love to camp, pick berries, hunt small game and bear, fish, and hike in the Chugach. In addition to these summer activities, we also ride snowmachines and snowshoe in the winter. We spend a large majority of our free time on the Kenai Peninsula but we also try to enjoy other areas of the Chugach as much as we can.

My two most favorite places to recreate are Lost Lake and Placer River during the winter on my snowmachine. As you well know, the low snow conditions the last few years has forced me and my friends and family to search out new places to ride and enjoy ourselves. With that being said, i think it would be completely unacceptable to lose anymore motorized acreage in the Chugach. It is already becoming harder to find open areas due to snow coverage, please dont limit us even more.

Speaking of snow coverage, i believe certain areas, like Lost Lake especially, can be rectified. Most times, 500 feet or so up the trail there is plenty of coverage. This would be a great place to build a wooden runway, 2 sleds wide that could protect the resources and still allow access to the motorized public. This could also help to free up space where motorized and non-motorized issues could exist. Motorized would be on the runway and non-motorized would be on a trail. It would also cut down on users in other areas with more areas open.

I would also like to see mills creek and center creek opened for motorized. There would still be plenty of non-motorized areas for access, not to mention the areas that just arent conducive to motorized use.

On average, I spend around 3 to 4 thousand dollars a year in the chugach. Be it fuel, camping spots, cabins, hotels, and food, its still money spent to recreate in the Chugach. Thats not counting vehicle and snowmachine cost and registration either.

I do understand the importance of preserving our wildlands. Im an outdoorsman and I want to see our wildlands last for future generations. However, I dont think one hobby should be considered greater or more important than another. We can all do what we love without any user type losing ground. If anything, the motorized group already has the lower scraps of area. Non-motorized gets the run of the forest until snow levels are adequate. As of late, that has been quite a lot.

Of the 4 recreation options given, i would like to see option B with some additions. As i stated above, i would like to see Mills Creek and Center Creek opened for motorized use. Additionally, why cant the land north of Cordova that is open to motorized use in options C and D be open in B as well? I would also hate to see the areas east of Seward closed. I have never ridden it before, but i never knew it was an option. I plan to ride that area now that I know I can.

National Parks land is suppose to be set aside for everyone to enjoy. Please allow everyone to enjoy it. If anything changes, please allow more area for motorized recreation. Especially winter motorized as it has little to no effect on the environment.

Lastly, i also feel like we do not need more wilderness or wsa areas than whats already there. A large majority of the Chugach is rugged and remote as is. That alone will ensure its wildlife preservation.

Thank you for allowing me to comment and make my voice heard. Please take into heavy consideration my requests. Also, please excuse any misspellings as I am typing this from my phone.

Thank you

Andy Lockhart