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Comments: I'm writing because of my belief we need to further improve the Forest Service's Final Plan and Environmental Impact Statement.

I'd like to first call to your attention that the Chugach National Forest in Alaska has the spectacular, Congressionally-designated Nellie Juan-College Fiord Wilderness Study Area. The Nellie Juan-College Fiord has nearly two million acres of ancient rainforest, wild salmon, mountains, glaciers, and hundreds of islands.

Because of these unique features, the Plan must protect the "wilderness character" of the WSA, not the Forest Service's weak proposal to protect just its "existing character." I believe that the wilderness must be emphaized in the Plan.

To accomplish this, the Plan must protect the wilderness character of the lands by classifying all of them with the Forest Service's "Primitive" standard, which is the most protective standard in the agency's recreational classification system.

It's also of fundamental importance to restore strong protection to these lands that the federal government purchased following the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill. These lands were acquired for the restoration of wilderness values and must be managed "in perpetuity for conservation and wilderness purposes," as promised when they were purchased. I believe this is very important to our citizens, who were justifiably shocked and upset by the damage caused by the oil spill.

Another point that must be addressed is the ongoing illegal recreational use of chainsaws in the WSA, which has resulted in damaging tree removal along dozens of wilderness beaches, including in sensitive areas.

Alternative D recommends the maximum amount of land for Wilderness of any of the Alternatives (97 percent of the WSA, or 1.884 million acres). I support a modified Alternative D wilderness recommendation that also includes Lake Nellie Juan and the lands within the WSA boundary that were purchased for restoration of wilderness resources following the oil spill.