

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/24/2018 11:47:56 PM

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Comments: As a concerned citizen who has enjoyed touring Alaska's natural areas with my daughter, I urge you to protect the "wilderness character" of the WSA, not the Forest Service's weak proposal to protect just its "existing character." Furthermore, the Plan must protect the wilderness character of the lands in the WSA 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.

Also it is important to restore strong protection to the lands within the WSA 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. Management as a wilderness is a top priority, not to be bargained or sold off.

The Chugach NF must address 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. If there is illegal logging or timber theft, this is something that needs to be addressed by law enforcement.

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.

These are our national treasures and need to be protected and preserved for present and future generations.

Please take a firm stand to support the protection of these natural areas.

Thank you,

Mari Hanley